

LONDON'S LURE

MELVILLE

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A

A Babylon of a place.

CHARLOTTE BRONTE (Letter, June 15, 1850).

I go hence
To London, to the gathering place of souls.

E. B. BROWNING, *Aurora Leigh* (Book II).

Go where we may, rest where we will,
Eternal London haunts us still.

THOMAS MOORE, *Rhymes on the Road*, IV.

To Joy's brisk ear there 's music in the throng;
Glorious the life of cities to the strong!

LYTTON, *The New Timon*.

Everything is different in London from what it is elsewhere—the people, their language, the horses, the *tout ensemble*—even the stones of London are different from others.

GEORGE BORROW, *Lavengro* (chap. xxxii).

London is on the way to everywhere. I have an old friend—an honest Lincolnshire squire—who, paying his sister a visit in Norfolk, always goes and returns by London.

WHYTE-MELVILLE, *Market Harborough* (chap. v).

She that brings to London a mind well prepared for improvement, though she misses her hope of uninterrupted happiness, will gain in return an opportunity of adding knowledge to vivacity, and enlarging innocence to virtue.

SAMUEL JOHNSON, *The Idler*, October 27th, 1759.

LONDON'S LURE



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LONDON'S LURE AN ANTHOLOGY

IN PROSE & VERSE

BY HELEN & LEWIS MELVILLE



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NOTE

THIS Anthology has no pretensions to be other than a collection of passages in Prose and Verse written about London, selected by the Compilers during several years' reading as possessing at once descriptive power and literary merit.

HELEN MELVILLE.

LEWIS MELVILLE.

SALCOMBE,

HARPENDEN, HERTS.

March, 1909.

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I

TOWN AND COUNTRY

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B



TOWN AND COUNTRY

LET them talk of lakes and mountains and romantic dales—all that fantastic stuff; give me a ramble by night, in the winter nights in London—the Lamps lit—the pavements of the motley Strand crowded with to and fro passengers—the shops all brilliant, and stuffed with obliging customers and obliged tradesmen—give me the old bookstalls of London—a walk in the bright Piazzas of Covent Garden. I defy a man to be dull in such places—perfect Mahometan paradises upon earth! I have lent out my heart with usury to such scenes from my childhood up, and have cried with fullness of joy at the multitudinous scenes of Life in the crowded streets of ever dear London. I wish you could fix here. I don't know if you quite comprehend my low Urban Taste; but depend upon it that a man of any feeling will have given his heart and his love in childhood and in boyhood to any scenes where he has been bred, as well to dirty streets (and smoky walls as they are called) as to green lanes, "where live nibbling sheep," and to the everlasting hills and the Lakes and ocean. A mob of men is better than a flock of sheep, and a crowd of happy faces justling into the playhouse at the hour of six is a more beautiful spectacle to man than the shepherd driving his "silly" sheep to fold. . . .

Charles Lamb to Robert Lloyd, Feb. 7, 1801.

London's Lure

THE CONTRAST

IN London I never know what I'd be at,
Enraptured with this, and enchanted with that;
I'm wild with the sweets of Variety's plan,
And Life seems a blessing too happy for man.

But the Country, God help me! sets all matters right,
So calm and composing from morning till night;
Oh! it settles the spirits when nothing is seen
But an ass on a common, a goose on a green.

In town if it rain, why it damps not our hope,
The eye has her choice, and the fancy her scope;
What harm though it pour whole nights or whole days?
It spoils not our prospects, or stops not our ways.

In the country what bliss, when it rains in the fields,
To live on the transports that shuttlecock yields;
Or go crawling from window to window, to see
A pig on a dunghill or crow on a tree.

In London, if folks ill together are put,
A *bore* may be dropp'd or a *quiz* may be cut:
We change without end; and if lazy or ill,
All wants are at hand, and all wishes at will.

In the country you're nail'd like a pale in the park,
To some *stick* of a neighbour that's cramm'd in the ark;
And 'tis odds, if you're hurt, or in fits tumble down,
You reach death ere the doctor can reach you from town.

Town and Country

In London how easy we visit and meet,
Gay pleasure's the theme, and sweet smiles are our treat;
Our morning's a round of good-humour'd delight,
And we rattle, in comfort, to pleasure at night.

In the country, how sprightly! our visits we make
Through ten miles of mud, for Formality's sake;
With the coachman in drink, and the moon in a fog,
And no thought in your head but a ditch or a bog.

In London the spirits are cheerful and light,
All places are gay and all faces are bright;
We've ever new joys, and reviv'd by each whim,
Each day on a fresh tide of pleasure we swim.

But how gay in the country! what summer delight
To be waiting for winter from morning to night!
Then the fret of impatience gives exquisite glee
To relish the sweet rural objects we see.

In town we've no use for the skies overhead,
For when the sun rises then we go to bed;
And as to that old-fashioned virgin the moon,
She shines out of season, like satin in June.

In the country these planets delightfully glare
Just to show the object we want isn't there:
Oh, how cheering and gay, when their beauties arise,
To sit and gaze round with the tears in one's eyes!

London's Lure

But 'tis in the country alone we can find
That happy resource, that relief to the mind
When, drove to despair, our last effort we make,
And drag the old fish-pond, for Novelty's sake:

Indeed I must own, 'tis a pleasure complete
To see ladies well draggled and wet in their feet;
But what is all that to the transport we feel
When we capture, in triumph, two toads and an eel?

I have heard, though, that love in a cottage is sweet,
When two hearts in one link of soft sympathy meet:
That 's to come—for as yet I, alas! am a swain
Who require, I own it, more links to my chain.

Your magpies and stock-doves may flirt among trees,
And chatter their transports in groves, if they please;
But a house is much more to my taste than a tree,
And for groves, oh! a good grove of chimneys for me.

In the country if Cupid should find a man out,
The poor tortured victim mopes hopeless about;
But in London, thank heaven! our peace is secure,
Where for one eye to kill, there 's a thousand to cure.

I know Love 's a devil, too subtle to spy,
That shoots through the soul, from the beam of an eye;
But in London these devils so quick fly about
That a new devil still drives an old devil out.

Town and Country

In town let me live, then, in town let me die;
For in truth I can't relish the country, not I.
If one must have a villa in summer to dwell,
Oh, give me the sweet shady side of Pall Mall!

Charles Morris.

LONDONERS AND COUNTRY PEOPLE.

If familiarity in cities breeds contempt, ignorance in the country breeds aversion and dislike. People come too much in contact in town: in other places they live too much apart, to unite cordially and easily. Our feelings, in the former case, are dissipated and exhausted by being called into constant and vain activity; in the latter they rust and grow dead for want of use. If there is an air of levity and indifference in London manners, there is a harshness, a moroseness, and disagreeable restraint in those of the country. We have little disposition to sympathy, when we have few persons to sympathize with: we lose the relish and capacity for social enjoyment, the seldomer we meet. A habit of sullenness, coldness, and misanthropy grows upon us. If we look for hospitality and a cheerful welcome in country places, it must be in those where the arrival of a stranger is an event, the recurrence of which need not be greatly apprehended, or it must be on rare occasions, on "some high festival of once a year." Then indeed the stream of hospitality, so

London's Lure

long dammed up, may flow without stint for a short season; or a stranger may be expected with the same sort of eager impatience as a caravan of wild beasts, or any other natural curiosity, that excites our wonder and fills up the craving of the mind after novelty. By degrees, however, even this last principle loses its effect: books, newspapers, whatever carries us out of ourselves into a world of which we see and know nothing becomes distasteful, repulsive; and we turn away with indifference or disgust from everything that disturbs our lethargic animal existence or takes off our attention from our petty, local pursuits. Man, left long to himself, is no better than a mere clod; or his activity, for want of some other vent, preys upon himself, or is directed to spleenetic, peevish dislikes, or vexatious, harassing persecution of others. I once drew a picture of a country life; it was a portrait of a particular place, a caricature if you will, but with certain allowances, I fear it was too like in the individual instance, and that it would hold too generally true.

William Hazlitt.

LONDON STREETS AND COUNTRY LANES

IS it not pleasant to wander
In town on Saturday night,
While people go hither and thither,
And shops shed cheerful light?

Town and Country

And, arm in arm, while our shadows
Chase us along the panes,
Are we not quite as cozy
As down among country lanes?

Nobody knows us, heeds us,
Nobody hears or sees,
And the shop-lights gleam more gladly
Than the moon on hedges and trees;
And people coming and going,
All upon ends of their own,
Though they work a spell on the spirit,
Make it more finely alone.

Robert Buchanan.

LONDON TOWN

LET others chaunt a country praise,
Fair river walks and meadow ways;
Dearer to me my sounding days
In *London Town*:
To me the tumult of the street
Is no less music than the sweet
Surge of the wind among the wheat,
By dale or down.

Three names my heart with rapture hails,
With homage: *Ireland, Cornwall, Wales*:
Lands of lone moor, and mountain gales
And stormy coast:

London's Lure

Yet *London's* voice upon the air
Pleads at mine heart, and enters there;
Sometimes I wellnigh love and care
For *London* most.

Listen upon the ancient hills:
All silence! save the lark, who trills
Through sunlight, save the rippling rills:
There peace may be.
But listen to great *London*! loud
As thunder from the purple cloud,
Comes the deep thunder of the crowd,
And heartens me.

O gray, O gloomy skies! What then!
Here is a marvellous world of men;
More wonderful than *Rome* was, when
The world was *Rome*!
See the great stream of life flow by!
Here thronging myriads laugh and sigh,
Here rise and fall, here live and die:
In this vast home.

In long array they march toward death,
Armies, with proud or piteous breath:
Forward! the spirit in them saith,
Spirit of Life:
Here the triumphant trumpets blow;
Here mourning music sorrows low;
Victors and vanquished, still they go
Forward in strife.

Town and Country

Who will not heed so great a sight?
Greater than marshalled stars of night,
That move to music and with light:

For these are men!

These move to music of the soul;
Passions, that madden or control:
These hunger for a distant goal,
• Seen now and then.

Is mine too tragical a strain,
Chaunting a burden full of pain,
And labour, that seems all in vain?

I sing but truth.

Still, many a merry pleasure yet,
To many a merry measure set,
Is ours, who need not to forget
Summer and youth.

Do *London* birds forget to sing?
Do *London* trees refuse to spring?
Is *London* May no pleasant thing?

Let country fields
To milking maid and shepherd boy
Give flowers and song and bright employ:
Her children also can enjoy
What *London* yields.

Gleaming with sunlight, each soft lawn
Lies fragrant beneath dew of dawn;
The spires and towers rise, far withdrawn,
Through golden mist:

London's Lure

At sunset, linger beside *Thames*:
See now, what radiant light and flames:
That ruby burns: that purple shames
The amethyst.

Winter was long, and dark, and cold:
Chill rains! grim fogs, black fold on fold,
Round streets and square and river rolled!
Ah, let it be:

Winter is gone! Soon comes July,
With wafts from hayfields by-and-by:
While in the dingiest courts you spy
Flowers fair to see.

Take heart of grace; and let each hour
Break gently into bloom and flower:
Winter and sorrow have no power
To blight all bloom.

One day, perchance, the sun will see
London's entire felicity:
And all her loyal children be
Clear of all gloom.

A dream! Dreams often dreamed come true.
Our world would seem a world made new
To those beneath the churchyard yew
Laid long ago!

When we beneath like shadows bide,
Fair *London*, throned upon *Thames'* side,
May be our children's children's pride:
And we shall know.

Lionel Johnson.

Town and Country

COCKNEY PRIDE

A REAL Cockney is the poorest creature in the world, the most literal, the most mechanical, and yet he too lives in a world of romance—a fairy-land of his own. He is a citizen of London; and this abstraction leads his imagination the finest dance in the world. London is the first city on the habitable globe; and therefore he must be superior to every one who lives out of it. There are more people in London than anywhere else; and though a dwarf in stature, his person swells out and expands into ideal importance and borrowed magnitude. He resides in a garret or in a two pair of stairs back room; yet he talks of the magnificence of London, and gives himself airs in consequence upon it, as if all the houses in Portman or in Grosvenor Square were his by right or in reversion. “He is owner of all he surveys.” The Monument, the Tower of London, St. James’s Palace, the Mansion House, Whitehall, are part and parcel of his being. Let us suppose him to be a lawyer’s clerk at half-a-guinea a week: but he knows the Inns of Court, the Temple Gardens, and Gray’s Inn Passage, sees the lawyers in their wigs walking up and down Chancery Lane, and has advanced within half-a-dozen yards of the Chancellor’s chair: who can doubt that he understands (by implication) every point of law (however intricate) better than the most expert country practitioner? He is a shopman, and nailed

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all day behind the counter: but he sees hundreds and thousands of gay, well-dressed people pass—an endless phantasmagoria—and enjoys their liberty and gaudy fluttering pride. He is a footman—but he rides behind beauty, through a crowd of carriages, and visits a thousand shops. Is he a tailor—that last infirmity of human nature? The stigma on his profession is lost in the elegance of the patterns he provides, and of the persons he adorns; and he is something very different from a mere country botcher. Nay, the very scavenger and nightman thinks the dirt in the street has something precious in it, and his employment is solemn, silent, sacred, peculiar to London! A *barker* in Monmouth Street, a slop-seller in Radcliffe Highway, a tapster at a night-cellar, a beggar in St. Giles's, a drab in Fleet-Ditch, live in the eyes of millions, and eke out a dreary, wretched, scanty, or loathsome existence from the gorgeous, busy, glowing scene around them. It is a common saying among such persons that "they had rather be hanged in London than die a natural death out of it anywhere else"—Such is the force of habit and imagination. Even the eye of childhood is dazzled and delighted with the polished splendour of the jewellers' shops, the neatness of the turnery ware, the festoons of artificial flowers, the confectionery, the chemists' shops, the lamps, the horses, the carriages, the sedan-chairs; to this was formerly added a set of traditional associations—Whittington and his Cat, Guy Faux

Town and Country

and the Gunpowder Treason, the Fire and the Plague of London, and the Heads of the Scotch Rebels that were stuck on Temple Bar in 1745. These have vanished, and in their stead the curious and romantic eye must be content to pore in Pennant for the site of old London-Wall, or to peruse the sentimental mile-stone that marks the distance to the place “where Hickes’s Hall formerly stood!”.

William Hazlitt.

THE LADIES OF ST. JAMES'S

THE ladies of St. James's
Go swinging to the play;
Their footmen run before them,
With a “Stand by! Clear the way!”
But Phyllida, my Phyllida!
She takes her buckled shoon,
When we go out a-courtting
Beneath the harvest moon.

The ladies of St. James's
Wear satin on their backs,
They sit all night at *Ombre*,
With candles all of wax:
But Phyllida, my Phyllida!
She dons her russet gown,
And runs to gather May dew
Before the world is down.

London's Lure

The ladies of St. James's!
They are so fine and fair,
You'd think a box of essences
Was broken in the air:
But Phyllida, my Phyllida!
The breath of heath and furze,
When breezes blow at morning,
Is not so fresh as hers.

The ladies of St. James's!
They're painted to the eyes:
Their white it stays for ever,
Their red it never dies:
But Phyllida, my Phyllida!
Her colour comes and goes;
It trembles to a lily,—
It wavers to a rose.

The ladies of St. James's!
You scarce can understand
The half of all their speeches,
Their phrases are so grand:
But Phyllida, my Phyllida!
Her shy and simple words
Are clear as after rain-drops
The music of the birds.

The ladies of St. James's!
They have their fits and freaks;
They smile on you—for seconds,
They frown on you—for weeks:

Town and Country

But Phyllida, my Phyllida!
Come either storm or shine,
From Shrove-tide unto Shrove-tide,
Is always true—and mine.

My Phyllida! my Phyllida!
I care not though they heap
The hearts of all St. James's,
And give me all to keep;
I care not whose the beauties
Of all the world may be,
For Phyllida—for Phyllida
Is all the world to me!

Austin Dobson.

INVITATION TO A PAINTER

(SENT FROM THE WEST OF IRELAND)

FLEE from London, good my Walter! boundless jail of bricks and gas,
Weary purgatorial flagstones, dreary parks of burnt-up grass,
Exhibitions, evening parties, dust and swelter, glare and crush,
Mammon's costly idle pomp, Mammon's furious race and rush.
Leave your hot tumultuous city for the breaker's rival roar,

London's Lure

Quit your small suburban garden for the rude
hills by the shore.
Leagues of smoke for morning vapour lifted off a
mountain range;
Silk and satin for barefoot beauty, and for "some-
thing new and strange"
All your townly wit and gossip.

William Allingham.

II
DAWN



Dawn

IMPRESSION DU MATIN

THE Thames nocturne of blue and gold
Changed to a Harmony in gray:
A barge with ochre-coloured hay
Dropt from the wharf: and chill and cold.

The yellow fog came creeping down
The bridges, till the houses' walls
Seemed changed to shadows, and St. Paul's
Loomed like a bubble o'er the town.

Then suddenly arose the clang
Of waking life; the streets were stirred
With country waggons: and a bird
Flew to the glistening roofs and sang.

But one pale woman all alone,
The daylight kissing her wan hair,
Loitered beneath the gaslamps' flare,
With lips of flame and heart of stone.

Oscar Wilde.

DAWN

IT was an hour past dawn . . . London is often beautiful in summer at that hour, the architectural lines clear and defined in the smokeless atmosphere, and ever and anon a fragrant gale from gardened balconies wafted in the blue air. Nothing

London's Lure

is stirring except waggons of strawberries and asparagus, and no one visible except a policeman or a Member of Parliament returning from a late division, where they have settled some great question that need never have been asked. Eve has its spell of calmness and consolation, but Dawn brings hope and joy.

Benjamin Disraeli.

THE APPROACH OF DAY

O 'ER royal London, in luxuriant May,
While lamps yet twinkled, dawning crept the day.
Home from the hell the pale-eyed gamester steals;
Home from the ball flash jaded Beauty's wheels;
The lean grimalkin, who, since night began,
Hath hymn'd to love amidst the wrath of man,
Scared from his raptures by the morning star,
Flits finely by, and threads the area bar;
From fields suburban rolls the early cart;
As rests the revel, so awakes the mart.
Transfusing Mocha from the beans within,
Bright by the crossing gleams the alchemic tin,—
There halts the craftsman; there, with envious sigh,
The houseless vagrant looks, and limps foot-weary by.

Lord Lytton.

Dawn

EARLY MORNING IN THE EAST END

IT was a cheerless morning . . . ; blowing and raining hard; and the clouds looking dull and stormy. The night had been very wet: large pools of water had collected in the road: and the kennels were overflowing. There was a faint glimmering of the coming day in the sky; but it rather aggravated than relieved the gloom of the scene: the sombre light only serving to pale that which the street lamps afforded, without shedding any warmer or brighter tints upon the wet housetops, and dreary streets. There appeared to be nobody stirring in that quarter of the town; the windows of the houses were all closely shut; and the streets through which they passed, were noiseless and empty.

. . . In the Bethnal Green Road the day had fairly begun to break. Many of the lamps were already extinguished; a few country waggons were slowly toiling on toward London; now and then, a stage-coach, covered with mud, rattled briskly by: the driver bestowing, as he passed, an admonitory lash upon the heavy waggoner who, by keeping on the wrong side of the road, had endangered his arriving at the office a quarter of a minute after his time. The public-houses, with gas-lights burning inside, were already open. By degrees, other shops began to be unclosed, and a few scattered people were met with. Then, came struggling groups of

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labourers going to their work; then, men and women with fish-baskets on their heads; donkey-carts laden with vegetables; chaise-carts filled with live-stock or whole carcasses of meat; milk-women with pails; an unbroken concourse of people, trudging out with various supplies to the eastern suburbs of the town. [In] the City the noise and traffic gradually increased; [and in] the streets between Shoreditch and Smithfield it had swelled into a roar of sound and bustle. It was as light as it was likely to be, till night came on again, and the busy morning of half the London population had begun.

Charles Dickens.

III
NIGHT



Night

PHIOMEL IN LONDON

NOT within a granite pass,
Dim with flowers and soft with grass—
Nay, but doubly, trebly sweet
In a poplared London street,
While below my windows go
Noiseless barges, to and fro,
Through the night's calm deep,
Ah! what breaks the bonds of sleep?

No steps on the pavement fall,
Soundless swings the dark canal;
From a church-tower out of sight
Clangs the central hour of night.
Hark! the Dorian nightingale!
Pan's voice melted to a wail!
Such another bird
Attic Tereus never heard.

Hung above the gloom and stain—
London's squalid cope of pain—
Pure as star-light, bold as love,
Honouring our scant poplar-grove,
That most heavenly voice of earth
Thrills in passion, grief or mirth,
Laves our poisoned air
Life's best song-bath crystal-fair.

While the starry minstrel sings
Little matters what it brings,

London's Lure

Be it sorrow, be it pain;
Let him sing and sing again,
Till, with dawn, poor souls rejoice,
Wakening, once to hear his voice,
Ere afar he flies,
Bound for purer woods and skies.

Edmund Gosse.

LIEN CHI ALTANGI ON THE CITY AT NIGHT

THE clock just struck two, the expiring taper rises and sinks in the socket, the watchman forgets the hour in slumber, the laborious and the happy are at rest, and nothing wakes but meditation, guilt, revelry, and despair. The drunkard once more fills the destroying bowl, the robber walks his midnight round, and the suicide lifts his guilty arm against his own sacred person.

Let me no longer waste the night over the page of antiquity, or the sallies of contemporary genius, but pursue the solitary walk, where vanity, ever changing, but a few hours past walked before me, where she kept up the pageant, and now, like a froward child, seems hushed with her own importunities.

What a gloom hangs all round! The dying lamp feebly emits a yellow gleam; no sound is heard but of the chiming clock, or the distant watch-dog. All the bustle of human pride is forgotten, an hour like this may well display the emptiness of human vanity.

Night

There will come a time when this temporary solitude may be made continual, and the city itself, like its inhabitants, fade away, and leave a desert in its room.

What cities, as great as this, have once triumphed in existence; had their victories as great; joy as just and as unbounded, and with short-sighted presumption, promised themselves immortality! Posterity can hardly trace the situation of some: the sorrowful traveller wanders over the awful ruins of others and, as he beholds, he learns wisdom, and feels the transience of every sublunary possession.

"Here," he cries, "stood their citadel, now grown over with weeds; there, their senate-house, but now the haunt of every noxious reptile; temples and theatres stood here, now only an undistinguished heap of ruin. They are fallen; for luxury and avarice first made them feeble. The rewards of the state were conferred on amusing, and not on useful, members of society. Their riches and opulence invited the invaders, who, though at first repulsed, returned again, conquered by perseverance, and at last swept the defendants into undistinguished destruction."

How few appear in those streets which, but some few hours ago, were crowded! and those who appear, now no longer wear their daily mask, nor attempt to hide their lewdness or their misery.

Oliver Goldsmith.

London's Lure

THE CITY ASLEEP

STILL as the Sea serene and deep,
When all the winds are laid,
The City sleeps—so still, its sleep
Maketh the soul afraid.

Over the living waters see!
The Seraphs shining go,—
The Moon is gliding hushfully
Through stars like flakes of snow.

In pearl-white silver here and there
The fallen moon-rays stream:
Hark! a dull stir is in the air,
Like the stir of one in dream.

Through all the thrilling waters creep
Deep throbs of strange unrest,
Like washings of the windless Deep
When it is peacefullest.

A little while—God's breath will go,
And hush the flood no more;
The dawn will break, the wind will blow,
The Ocean rise and roar.

Each day with sounds of strife and death
The waters rise and call;
Each midnight, conquered by God's breath,
To this dead calm they fall.

Night

Out of His heart the fountains flow,
The brook, the running river,
He marks them strangely come and go,
For ever and for ever.

Till darker, deeper, one by one,
After a weary quest,
They from the light of moon and sun,
Flow back, into His breast.

Love, hold my hand! be of good cheer!
For His would be the cost,
If, out of all the waters here,
One little drop were *lost*.

Heaven's eyes above the waters dumb
Innumerably yearn;
Out of His heart each drop hath come,
And thither *must* return.

Robert Buchanan.

SUNDAY EVENING IN LONDON

IT was a Sunday evening in London, gloomy, close, and stale. Maddening church bells of all degrees of dissonance, sharp and flat, cracked and clear, fast and slow, make the brick and mortar echoes hideous. Melancholy streets in a penitential garb of soot, steeped the souls of the people who were condemned to look at them out of the windows,

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in dire despondency. In every thoroughfare, up almost every valley, and down almost every turning, some doleful bell was throbbing, jerking, tolling, as if the Plague was in the city and the dead carts were going round. Everything was bolted and barred that could by possibility furnish relief to an overworked people. No pictures, no unfamiliar animals, no rare plants or flowers, no natural or artificial wonders of the ancient world—all *taboo* with that enlightened strictness, that the ugly South Sea gods in the British Museum might have supposed themselves at home again. Nothing to see but streets, streets, streets. Nothing to breathe but streets, streets, streets. Nothing to change the brooding mind, or raise it up. Nothing for the spent toiler to do, but to compare the monotony of his seventh day with the monotony of his six days, think what a weary life he led, and make the best of it—or the worst, according to the probabilities.

Charles Dickens.

A COCKNEY'S EVENING SONG.

FADES into twilight the last golden gleam
Thrown by the sunset on upland and stream;
Glints o'er the Serpentine—tips Notting Hill—
Dies on the summit of proud Pentonville.

Day brought us trouble, but Night brings us peace;
Morning brought sorrow, but Eve bids it cease.

Night

Gaslight and gaiety, beam for a while;
Pleasure and Paraffin, lend us a smile.

Temples of Mammon are voiceless again—
Lonely policemen inherit Park Lane
Silent is Lothbury—quiet Cornhill—
Babel of Commerce, thine echoes are still.

Far to the South—where the wanderer strays
Lost among graveyards and riverward ways,
Hardly a footfall and hardly a breath
Comes to dispute Laurence-Pountney with Death.

Westward the stream of Humanity glides;—
'Buses are proud of their dozen insides.
Put up thy shutters, grim Care, for to-day—
Mirth and the lamplighter hurry this way.

Out on the glimmer weak Hesperus yields!
Gas for the cities and stars for the fields.
Daisies and buttercups, do as ye list;
I and my friends are for music or whist.

Henry S. Leigh.

A SILENT HOUR

HOW often have I paced through Bloomsbury and Russell Squares on a dark winter's morning between half-past two and half-past three, and seen nothing alive save a tom-cat! A faint light here and there suggests a sick-room, and if you know what that is yourself, you sigh as you go on.

London's Lure

To think that all those houses are full of human folk and that they should all be so still!

Dear God! the very houses seem asleep.

The sounds, too, of London, the rattle of wheels, the hum of voices, the shouts of revellers, are heard no longer. They die away by about three, when all is still, but in half an hour there are dropping shots of sound, and soon the heavy waggons on their way to Covent Garden come rumbling by, the advance guard of the waking millions.

Sir John Robinson.

AFTER NIGHTFALL

WALKING along the road after nightfall, I thought all at once of London streets, and, by a freak of mind, wished I were there. I saw the shining of shop-fronts, the yellow glistening of a wet pavement, the hurrying people, the cabs, the omnibuses—and I wished I were amid it all.

What did it mean, but that I wished I were young again? Not seldom I have a sudden vision of a London street, perhaps the dreariest and ugliest, which for a moment gives me a feeling of homesickness. Often it is the High Street of Islington, which I have not seen for a quarter of a century, at least; no thoroughfare in all London less attractive to the imagination, one would say; but I see myself

Night

walking there—walking with the quick light step of youth, and there, of course, is the charm. I see myself, after a long day of work and loneliness, setting forth from my lodging. For the weather I care nothing; rain, wind, fog—what does it matter! The fresh air fills my lungs; my blood circles rapidly; I feel my muscles, and have a pleasure in the hardness of the stone I tread upon. Perhaps I have money in my pocket; I am going to the theatre, and, afterwards, I shall treat myself to supper—sausage and mashed potatoes, with a pint of foaming ale. The gusto with which I look forward to each and every enjoyment! At the pit-door, I shall roll and hustle amid the throng, and find it amusing. Nothing tires me. Late at night, I shall walk all the way back to Islington, most likely singing as I go. Not because I am happy—nay, I am anything but that; but my age is something and twenty; I am strong and well.

George Gissing.

THE CITY ASLEEP

DARKLY, under a drifting moon,
The streets lie empty of sound of life;
Dawn of to-morrow come not soon!
Silent afar is yesterday's noon,
And the city forgets its sorrow and strife:
Oh, weary eyes and hearts that ache,
Sleep!—it is better to sleep than wake.

London's Lure

Here, where all day the air was loud
With a rattle of carts and jingle of cars
And the murmur and laughter and tread of the crowd,
Are only the ruts that the wheels have ploughed,
And rails that gleam with a glint of the stars,
And dreaming streets that the crowd forsake:
Sleep!—it is better to sleep than wake.

Toil and care to the day belong;
To-morrow their tears shall fall again,
But now for a little the weak are strong;
Sleep knows nothing of right and wrong,
To-night feels naught of to-morrow's pain.
Sleep has a cup all thirst to slake:
Sleep!—it is better to sleep than wake.

Bare little feet grown hard on the stones,
Gaunt little hands that work has worn—
O children, whom man enslaves or disowns,
Christ in His Heaven has heard your moans
And touched you with happy death till morn.
Children, to-morrow your hearts shall ache:
Sleep!—it is better to sleep than wake.

Sorrow and sin crouch side by side,
Stived in their slum as swine in their pen;
Sin?—is it sorrow too sorely tried?
A birth of the ashes where hope has died?
Weary and outcast women and men,
Is it God that mars what His own hands make?
Sleep!—it is better to sleep than wake.

Night

Wealth that dwells on the heights serene,
Virtue a-dream in your blissful bower,
With the blood of the poor are your walls unclean,
Your pleasures are dredged from their loves obscene;

Could ye smell the filth of the root in the flower,
What joy in the scent thereof would ye take?
Sleep!—it is better to sleep than wake.

Palace and hovel, the prince and the throng,
Are one in sleep 'neath the drifting moon;
Now for a little the weak are strong,
Sleep knows nothing of right or wrong:

Dawn of to-morrow, come not soon!
Eyes that are tearless and hearts that break,
Sleep!—it is better to sleep than wake.

A. St. John Adcock.

THE LIGHTS OF LONDON TOWN

THE way was long and weary,
But gallantly they strode,
A country lad and lassie,
Along the heavy road.

The night was dark and stormy,
But blithe of heart were they,
For shining in the distance
The Lights of London lay.

O gleaming lamps of London that gem the City's
crown,
What fortunes lie within you, O Lights of London
Town!

London's Lure

The years passed on and found them
 Within the mighty fold,
The years had brought them trouble,
 And brought them little gold.
Oft from their garret window,
 On long, still summer nights,
They'd seek the far-off country
 Beyond the London lights.

O mocking lamps of London, what weary eyes look
 down,
And mourn the day they saw you, O Lights of
 London Town!

With faces worn and weary,
 That told of sorrow's load,
One day a man and woman
 Crept down a country road.
They sought their native village,
 Heart-broken from the fray;
Yet shining still behind them,
 The Lights of London lay.

O cruel lamps of London, if tears your light could
 drown
Your victim's eyes would weep them, O Lights of
 London Town!

George R. Sims.

Night

A STILL NIGHT

A VERY quiet night. When the moon shines very brilliantly, a solitude and stillness seem to proceed from her, that influence even crowded places full of life. Not only is it a still night on dusty high roads and on hill-summits, whence a wide expanse of country may be seen in repose, quieter and quieter as it spreads away into a fringe of trees against the sky, with the grey ghost of a bloom upon them; not only is it a still night in gardens and woods, and on the river where the water-meadows are fresh and green, and the stream sparkles on among pleasant islands, murmuring weirs and whispering rushes; not only does the stillness attend it as it flows where houses cluster thick, where many bridges are reflected in it, where wharves and shipping make it black and awful, where it winds from these disfigurements through marshes whose grim beacons stand like skeletons washed ashore, where it expands through the bolder region of rising grounds, rich in corn-field, windmill, and steeple, and where it mingles with the ever-heaving sea; not only is it a still night on the deep, and on the shore where the watcher stands to see the ship with her spread wings cross the path of light that appears to be presented to only him; but even on this stranger's wilderness of London there is some rest. Its steeples and towers, and its one great dome, grow

London's Lure

more ethereal; its smoky house-tops lose their grossness, in the pale effulgence; the noises that arise from the streets are fewer and are softened, and the footsteps on the pavements pass more tranquilly away. In these fields of Mr. Tulkinghorn's inhabiting, where the shepherds play on Chancery pipes that have no stop, and keep their sheep in the fold by hook and by crook until they have shorn them exceeding close, every noise is merged this moonlight night, into a distant ringing hum, as if the city was a vast glass, vibrating.

Charles Dickens.

IV

HYDE PARK AND KENSINGTON
GARDENS



Hyde Park and Kensington Gardens

NEWS FROM HYDE PARK

ONE evening a little before it was dark,
Sing tantararara tantivee,
I call'd for my gelding and rid to Hide Park,
On tantararara tantivee:

It was in the merry month of May,
When meadows and fields were gaudy and gay,
And flowers apparell'd bright as the day,
I got upon my tantivee.

The Park shone brighter than the skyes,
Sing tantararara tantivee.

With jewels, and gold, and ladies' eyes,
That sparkled and cry'd come see me:
Of all parts of England Hide Park hath the name
For coaches and horses, and persons of fame,
It looked at first sight like a field full of flame,
Which made me ride up tantivee.

There hath not been seen such a sight since Adam's,
For perriwig, ribbon, and feather.

Hide Park may be termed the market of Madams,
Or Lady-Fair, chuse you whether;
Their gowns were a yard too long for their legs,
They show'd like the rainbow cut into rags,
A garden of flowers, or a navy of flags,
When they all did mingle together.

Anon.

London's Lure

THE MACARONI

WHEN behind all my hair is done up in a plait,
And so like a cor'net's tuck'd under my hat,
Then I mount on my palfrey as gay as a lark,
And followed by John, take the dust in Hyde Park.
In the way I am met by some smart Macaroni,
Who rides by my side on a little bay pony;
No sturdy Hibernian with shoulders so wide,
But as taper and slim as the ponies they ride,
Their legs are as slim, and their shoulders no wider,
Dear sweet little creatures, both pony and rider!

But sometimes, when hotter, I order my chaise,
And manage myself my two little greys:
Sure never were seen two such sweet little ponies;
Other horses are clowns, and *these* Macaronies.
And to give them this title I'm sure is not wrong,
Their legs are so slim, and their tails are so long.

In Kensington Gardens to stroll up and down,
You know was the fashion before you left town;
The thing's well enough when allowance is made
For the size of the trees and the depth of the shade,
But the spread of their leaves such a shelter affords
To those noisy, impertinent creatures called birds,
Whose ridiculous chirruping ruins the scene,
Brings the country before me and gives me the spleen.-

Hyde Park and Kensington Gardens

Yet though 'tis too rural—to come near the mark;
We all herd in *one* walk, and that nearest the Park;
There with ease we may see, as we pass by the wicket,
The chimneys of Knightsbridge, and—footmen at
cricket.

I must though, in justice, declare that the grass,
Which, worn out by our feet, is diminish'd apace,
In a little time more will be brown, and as flat
As the sand at Vauxhall, or as Ranelagh mat.
Improving thus fast, perhaps by degrees,
We may see rolls and butter spread under the trees,
With a small pretty band in each seat of the walk,
To play little tunes and enliven our talk.

Anon.

THE SERPENTINE

MY notion of a holiday was always associated with the Serpentine. I loved that little bit of water as if it had been the sea. I used to make it a sea by sitting down on one of the benches and shading my eyes so as to hide the opposite bank—so that I could see nothing but the grey rippling water, hear nothing but the wind in the trees overhead; and then I grew almost faint with the dull dumb joy of being alone by the sea. I forgot the rich people who were riding up and down the Row behind me; I saw none of the poor idling loungers who stood at the end of the lake, and

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threw crumbs or stones at the ducks. There was nothing before me but the wind-stirred water, and where I could see no more water, I imagined water until it touched the sky. Sometimes I fancied I could hear the sound of waves on the far-off coast; sometimes I fancied I could see, just on the line of the horizon, a faint white speck of a ship appear, catching a touch of gold from the sunset. The Serpentine is small and insignificant, doubtless; but so is a sea-shell, and the sea-shell, if you are alone, and if you listen closely, will tell you stories of the sea.

William Black.

THE SERPENTINE

THESE charms, and more than these, are thine.

Straight though thou art, O Serpentine!

Soft blows the breeze, and sun-beams dance
And sparkle on thy smooth expanse.

To thy cool streams the deer confides

His branching horns, and dappled sides;

And cattle on thy shelving brink

Snuff the sweet air, or stoop to drink.

There (as a merry making gathers

Young children round their old grandfathers,)

Trees meet in all their generations,

From withered stumps to new plantations,

Backed by the "glittering skirts" of London,

Hyde Park and Kensington Gardens

Its buildings now in shade, now sunn'd on.
And though 'twould any tourist gravel
Or home or foreign be his travel,
In rummaging his sketch-book through
To find a more enlivening view,
Yet, to go further and fare worse,
Folks waste their time, and drain their purse!

Henry Luttrell.

THE VIEW FROM THE BRIDGE ON THE SERPENTINE

THE view from the bridge over the Serpentine has an extraordinary nobleness, and it has often seemed to me that the Londoner twitted with his low standard may point to it with every confidence. In all the town-scenery of Europe there can be few things so fine; the only reproach it is open to is that it begs the question by seeming—in spite of its being the pride of five millions of people—not to belong to a town at all. The towers of Nôtre Dame, as they rise, in Paris, from the island that divides the Seine, present themselves no more impressively than those of Westminster as you see them looking doubly far beyond the shining stretch of Hyde Park water. Equally admirable is the large, river-like manner in which the Serpentine opens a way between its wooded shores. Just after you have crossed the bridge (whose very bannisters,

London's Lure

old and ornamental, of yellowish-brown stone, I am particularly fond of), you enjoy on your left, through the gate of Kensington Gardens as you go towards Bayswater, an altogether enchanting vista—a foot-path over the grass which loses itself beneath the scattered oaks and elms exactly as if the place were a "chase." There could be nothing less like London in general than this particular morsel, and yet it takes London, of all cities, to give you such an impression of the country.

Henry James.

KENSINGTON GARDENS IN THE 'FIFTIES

KENSINGTON Gardens form an eminently beautiful piece of artificial woodland and park scenery. The old palace of Kensington, now inhabited by the Duchess of Inverness, stands at one extremity; an edifice of no great mark, built of brick, covering much ground, and low in proportion to its extent. In front of it, at a considerable distance, there is a sheet of water; and in all directions there are vistas of wide paths among noble trees, standing in groves, or scattered in clumps; everything being laid out with free and generous spaces, so that you can see long streams of sunshine among the trees, and there is a pervading influence of quiet and remoteness. Tree does not interfere

Hyde Park and Kensington Gardens

with tree; the art of man is seen conspiring with Nature, as if they had consulted together how to make a beautiful scene, and had taken ages of quiet thought and tender care to accomplish it. We strolled slowly along these paths, and sometimes deviated from them to walk beneath the trees, many of the leaves of which lay beneath our feet, yellow and brown, and with a pleasant smell of vegetable decay. These were the leaves of chestnut-trees; the other trees (unless elms) have yet hardly begun to shed their foliage, although you can discern a sober change of hue in the woodland masses; and the trees individualise themselves by assuming each its own tint, though in a very modest way. If they could have undergone the change of an American autumn, it would have been like putting on a regal robe. Autumn often puts one on in America, but it is apt to be very ragged.

Nathaniel Hawthorne.

KENSINGTON GARDEN

WHERE *Kensington*, high o'er the neighbouring lands
'Midst greens and sweets, a Regal fabric,
stands,
And sees each spring, luxuriant in her bowers,
A snow of blossoms, and a wilde of flowers,

London's Lure

The Dames of *Britain* oft in crowds repair
To gravel walks, and unpolluted air.
Here, while the Town in damps and darkness lies,
They breathe in sunshine, and see azure skies;
Each walk, with robes of various dies bespread,
Seem from afar a moving Tulip-bed,
Where rich Brocades and glossy Damasks glow,
And Chints, the rival of the show'ry Bow.

Thomas Tickell.

KENSINGTON GARDENS

SO Ferdinand entered Kensington Gardens, and walked in those rich glades and stately avenues.

It seems to the writer of this history that the inhabitants of London are scarcely sufficiently sensible of the beauty of its environs. On every side the most charming retreats open to them, nor is there a metropolis in the world surrounded by so many rural villages, picturesque parks, and elegant casinos. With the exception of Constantinople, there is no city in the world that can for a moment enter into competition with it. For himself, though in his time something of a rambler, he is not ashamed in this respect to confess to a legitimate Cockney taste; and for his part he does not know where life can flow on more pleasantly than in sight of Kensington Gardens, viewing the silver Thames winding by the bowers of Rosebank, or inhaling

Hyde Park and Kensington Gardens

from its terraces the refined air of graceful Richmond.

In exactly ten minutes it is in the power of every man to free himself from all the tumult of the world; the pangs of love, the throbs of ambition, the wear and tear of play; the recriminating boudoir, the conspiring club, the rattling hell; and find himself in a sublime sylvan solitude superior to the cedars of Lebanon, and inferior only in extent to the chestnut forest of Anatolia. It is Kensington Gardens that is almost the only place that has realised his idea of the forests of Spenser and Ariosto. What a pity that, instead of a princess in distress we meet only a nursery maid! But here is the fitting and convenient locality to brood over our thoughts; to project the great and achieve the happy. It is here that we should get our speeches by heart, invent our impromptus, muse over the caprices of our mistresses, destroy a cabinet, and save a nation.

Benjamin Disraeli.

ROTTEN ROW

THERE'S a tempting bit of greenery—of *rus in urbe* scenery

That's haunted by the London "upper ten;"
Where, by exercise on horseback, an equestrian may
force back

Little fits of *tedium vitae* now and then.

London's Lure

Oh! the times that I have been there, and the types
that I have seen there

Of that gorgeous Cockney animal, the "swell;"
And the scores of pretty riders (both patricians and
outsiders)

Are considerably more than I can tell.

When first the warmer weather brought these people
all together,

And the crowds began to thicken through the Row,
I reclined against the railing on a sunny day inhaling
All the spirits that the breezes could bestow.

And the riders and the walkers and the thinkers and
the talkers

Left me lonely in the thickest of the throng,
Not a touch upon my shoulder—not a nod from
one beholder—

As the stream of Art and Nature went along.

But I brought away one image, from that fashion-
able scrimmage,

Of a figure and a face—ah, *such* a face!
Love has photograph'd the features of that loveliest
of creatures

On my memory, as Love alone can trace.

Did I hate the little dandy in the whiskers (they
were sandy),

Whose absurd salute was honour'd by a smile?

Hyde Park and Kensington Gardens

Did I marvel at his rudeness in presuming on her
goodness,
When she evidently loathed him all the while?

Oh the hours that I have wasted, the regrets that I
have tasted,
Since the day (it seems a century ago)
When my heart was won *instanter* by a lady in a
canter,
On a certain sunny day in Rotten Row!

Henry S. Leigh.

HYDE PARK

THE Park! that magnet of the town,
That idol to which all bow down!
Mount, Julia, ('tis the noon of May)
Mount your barouche, or dappled grey,
And on some gentle elevation
Pranked in new verdure, take your station.
See how the universal throng,
Borne in one swelling tide along,
Crowds to its turf-clad altars, there
To beg the blessing of fresh air!
Throughout the week, but most on one day
Enjoyed beyond all others—Sunday,
With many a mutual punch and shove,
To Hyde-Park-Corner on they move,

London's Lure

Like bees that, when the weather's warm,
Grow weary of their hives and swarm:
All active on that day of rest;
Pressing on every side, and pressed
In Phebus' eye, from east to west,
With a fair chance, while thus they busy 'em,—
To sleep that evening in Elysium.

• • • • •
Lads, lasses, mothers, children, fathers,
All equal here, as if the pavement
To level them were like the grave meant,
As if one will informed the whole,
Press onward to a common goal.
Here mingle, in one mass confounded,
All shapes, all sizes, slim and rounded,
With all imaginable features
That e'er distinguished human creatures.
Nor less their habits disagree:
Some have, at sunset, risen from tea;
Some linger on, till Dusk, at nine,
Bids them retire to dress and dine,
The same delights together jumble
The rich and poor, the proud and humble.
Th' enfranchised tradesman, when he stirs,
Here, jostles half his customers.
Here, in a rage, the Bond-street spark
Is bearded by his father's clerk;
While yon proud dame (O sad event) is
Out-elbowed by her own apprentice!

Henry Luttrell.

V

PICCADILLY AND MAYFAIR



Piccadilly and Mayfair

PICCADILLY

I DO not think it can be a merely personal and individual pleasure that comes to me when on a fine morning I look down Piccadilly from the top of the slope. I have observed it often in others, and I always fancy that people look brighter, with a blander eye on the world, here than elsewhere in London. For myself, I am conscious of a sort of ludicrous increase of importance, as though here one were less of an ant on an ant-hill and more of a necessary screw in the machine. I feel almost as one having a definite and not despicable place in the community, who can hold up his head and meet the world with a smile, not dodge it round a corner. Perhaps it is that one's mind unconsciously surveys its memories of those who have strolled down Piccadilly,—not only those whose achievements or fortune have been infinitely greater, but those who have come to infinitely worse grief; and it unconsciously reminds itself that the descent is not altogether completed. Some have so walked down Piccadilly and continued their walking till they did it on tottering but honoured feet: others have walked down Piccadilly and walked away into some unknown Inferno. I will not trouble you with the associations of this or that house: perhaps they too add to one's importance, as one feels solemn in a graveyard.

G. S. Street.

London's Lure

PICCADILLY

PICCADILLY! —shops, palaces, bustle, and
breeze,

The whirring of wheels, and the murmur of trees,
By daylight, or nightlight, noisy, or stilly,
Whatever my mood is—I love Piccadilly.

Wet nights, when the gas on the pavement is stream-
ing,

And young Love is watching, and old Love is
dreaming,

And Beauty is whirl'd off to conquest, where shrilly
Cremona makes nimble thy toes, Piccadilly!

Bright days, when we leisurely pace to and fro,
And meet all the people we do or don't know,—
Here is jolly old Brown, and his fair daughter Lillie;—
No wonder, young pilgrim, you like Piccadilly!

See yonder pair riding, how fondly they saunter!
She smiles on her poet, whose heart's in a canter:
Some envy her spouse, and some covet her filly,
He envies them both,—he's an ass, Piccadilly!

Now were I that gay bride, with a slave at my feet,
I would choose me a house in my favourite street;
Yes or no—I would carry my point, willy, nilly;
If "no,"—pick a quarrel; if "yes,"—Piccadilly!

Piccadilly and Mayfair

From Primrose balcony, long ages ago,
"Old Q" sat at gaze,—who now passes below?
A frolicsome statesman, the Man of the Day,
A laughing philosopher, gallant and gay;
No darling of fortune more manfully trod,
Full of years, full of fame, and the world at his nod,
Heu, anni fugaces! The wise and the silly,
Old P or old Q.,—we must quit Piccadilly.

Life is chequer'd, a patchwork of smiles and of
frowns;
We value its ups, let us muse on its downs;
There's a side that is bright, it will then turn the
other,
One turn, if a good one, deserves such another.
These downs are delightful, *these* ups are not hilly,—
Let us try one more turn ere we quit Piccadilly.

Frederick Locker-Lampson.

PICCADILLY

MANY, if they were asked, would say that Piccadilly is cheerful, and satisfactory. This is, indeed, the happiest way of criticising Piccadilly. Thanks to the Green Park on its left side, the street has verdure, at least, and is airy. The ups and downs of it have a picturesqueness of their own. The wealthy houses, if they are not dignified, if they have not the stately proportions of

London's Lure

Florentine palaces, are, at all events, clean and large, and so far imposing. There are two times and seasons when Piccadilly looks its best. One of these is in mid-May, when all the flowering trees are in blossom, when the chestnut hangs out its fragrant tapers in the green shade of its fans, when the hawthorn perfumes even the London air, when the laburnums are "drooping wells of fire," when on all the boughs is the tender green, and the first flush of spring. London is very well supplied with trees, and, for a few days early in the season, the town has almost a Chaucerian aspect of prettiness and innocence. That jaded old Piccadilly in her spring dress looks as fresh as a young lady in her first season. The women have not grown weary of their unrelenting social activities; there are radiant faces newly come from the country, there are tall young men of rosy aspect, beautifully attired, with high stiff collars, and gloves irreproachable, and lustrous boots. This is the moment to see Piccadilly—bright, gay, crowded, and yet not sophisticated and worldly to look upon.

The next best aspect, or perhaps the best aspect, of Piccadilly is in the evening in mid October, when the lingering light flushes the houses, the sunset struggling through the opals of the London smoke, red and azures blending in the distance, while all down through "the gradual dusky veil" of evening the serpentine lines of lamps begin to burn. London, when there is not a fog, has sunsets of peculiar beauty,

Piccadilly and Mayfair

thanks perhaps to the smoky air; whatever the reason, they are very soft, rich, and strange. Many a time, walking eastward through the early dusk in Piccadilly, I have turned back, and stood watching these beautiful effects, which Mr. Marshall, by the bye, often renders admirably in water colours. Unless civilization quite shuts out the sky she cannot absolutely improve beauty off the face of the town. And in Piccadilly there are "lots of sky," as the little street boy said when, for the first time, he was taken into the country. Above the crowd, the smoke, the struggle, beyond the yells of them who vend the disastrous evening papers, far remote from the cries of murder and sedition, the serene sky looks down on you, and the sunset brings its harmonies even into Piccadilly. The artist cannot represent these things in his black and white; these beauties must be seen, and into many a spirit that is tired of towns they bring their own tranquillity and speak silently of how the solemn and charmed hour is passing in her royal robes over mountains and pale sea-straits, over long river pools, over reedy lochs, where our hearts are, and where we fain would be, though we "pad the weary hoof" in Piccadilly. London is a hard place for those who in their cradles "were breathed on by the rural Pan," but even in London Nature has her moments, and does not absolutely and always veil her face.

Andrew Lang.

London's Lure

THE ROAR OF PICCADILLY

LATE one summer evening, we . . . turned into the Green Park, and sat, for a silent minute or two, on a seat, a little within the Park, but facing the Piccadilly houses; and it was then and there that I had the first sensation of the phenomenon that I have verified since by I know not how many repetitions. I called it then the *Roar of Piccadilly*; and that is the name by which I still think of it. Ceaselessly on your ear, from that spot within the Green Park, ceaselessly and not intermittently, there comes a roar or a boom, as if all the noises of all the wheels of all the carriages in creation were mingled and ground together into one subdued, hoarse, moaning hum, not unpleasing, but melancholy and mystical. The passing carriages in Piccadilly itself and the adjacent streets, furnish really, I suppose, all the sound; but, in listening, one can hardly believe this, so unbroken is the roar, so equable, and seeming to consist of such a complex amalgam of noises gathered far and near over an area of unknown miles. A similar roar, also characteristic of London, is audible on the top of St. Paul's; but that vertical or ascending roar from London lying beneath may be distinguished, if I may trust my own recollection of it, from the horizontal roar that comes to you from the London of your own level as you are seated meditatively in the Green Park, just off Piccadilly. All day, and, I believe, all

Piccadilly and Mayfair

night, it goes on, one and the same, and without an instant of stop. Doubtless it has been modified somewhat, attenuated somewhat, by improvements of the material for street paving, and by the invention of elastic tyres for wheels; but essentially it is indestructible. I heard it first nearly sixty years ago; I heard it in my last visit to London; while I write this, four hundred miles away from it, I know it is there, the ceaseless *Roar of Piccadilly*. Melancholy I have called it; but that may depend on the mood of the listener. Certainly to a stranger in London, beginning his chances of fortune there, or looking forward to that likelihood, I can conceive nothing more saddening than a solitary reverie on one of those seats in the Green Park, with that roar of Piccadilly as continuous in his ear as if a sea-shell were held close to it, and telling of the pitiless immensity of life and motion amid which he, one poor atom more, means to find a home. Let him therefore stand up, and, if it is late in the afternoon, make his way, as I did, into the adjacent Hyde Park, where by this time all the rank and wealth and beauty are beginning their slow procession of mutual review in the great carriage-drive between Apsley House and the bridge over the Serpentine at the entry to Kensington Gardens. There is noise there too, and matter enough to continue the mood of sadness in one who feels himself but a solitary young alien among the files of pedestrians by the side of the vast whirl; but, on the whole, all other

London's Lure

feelings yield to the exhilaration, the splendid interest and variety of the spectacle. This is London in full season, and in its most glorious conflux; and where in the world besides can there be seen such a gathered tulip-show of radiant faces and dresses, blazing liveries, magnificent equipages? To a provincial, beholding the spectacle for the first time, I am not sure but the horses are as impressive a part of it, as memorable a revelation of the supremacy of the metropolis, as the assembled aristocracy of human beings. Goodish horses are to be seen anywhere; but hardly till one has been in Hyde Park, in a late afternoon between April and August, when the stream of carriages is in motion on the carriage-drive, and there are still riders enough in Rotten Row, is the idea of what a horse may be made perfect by abundance of illustration. After that you know a good horse at first sight for ever, and look askance at the poor triangular brutes that pass for horses where people know no better.

David Masson.

ARCADES AMBO

WHY are ye wandering aye 'twixt porch and porch,
Thou and thy fellow—when pale stars fade
At dawn, and when the glowworm lights her torch,
O Beadle of the Burlington Arcade?
—Who asketh why the Beautiful was made?

Piccadilly and Mayfair

A wan cloud drifting o'er the waste of blue,
The thistledown that floats above the glade,
The lilac-blooms of April—fair to view,
And naught but fair are these; and such, I ween,
are you.

Yes, ye are beautiful. The young street boys
Joy in your beauty. Are ye there to bar
Their pathway to that paradise of toys,
Ribbons and rings? Who'll blame ye if ye are?
Surely no shrill and clattering crowd should mar
The dim aisle's stillness, where in noon's midglow
Trip fair-hair'd girls to boot-shop or bazaar;
Where, at soft eve, serenely to and fro
The sweet boy-graduates walk, nor deem the pastime
slow.

And O! forgive me, Beadles, if I paid
Scant tribute to your worth, when first ye stood
Before me robed in broadcloth and brocade
And all the nameless grace of Beadlehood!
I would not smile at ye—if smile I could
Now as erewhile, ere I had learn'd to sigh:
Ah, no! I know ye beautiful and good,
And evermore will pause as I pass by,
And gaze, and gazing think, how base a thing am I.

C. S. Calverley.

London's Lure

MAYFAIR

In that part of the celebrated parish of St. George, which is bounded on one side by Piccadilly and on the other by Curzon Street, is a district of a peculiar character. 'Tis a cluster of small streets of little houses, frequently intersected by mews, which here are numerous, and sometimes gradually, rather than abruptly, terminating in a ramification of those mysterious regions. Sometimes a group of courts develops itself, and you may even chance to find your way into a small market-place. Those, however, who are accustomed to connect these hidden residences of the humble with scenes of misery and characters of violence, need not apprehend in this district any appeal to their sympathies, or any shock to their tastes. All is extremely genteel; and there is almost as much repose as in the golden saloons of the contiguous palaces. At any rate, if there be as much vice, there is as little crime.

No sight or sound can be seen or heard at any hour, which could pain the most precise or the most fastidious. Even if a chance oath may float on the air from the stableyard to the lodging of a French cook, 'tis of the newest fashion, and, if responded to with less of novel charm, the repartee is at least conveyed in the language of the most polite of nations. They bet upon the Derby in these parts a little, are interested in Goodwood, which they frequent, have perhaps, in general, a weakness for

Piccadilly and Mayfair

play, live highly, and indulge those passions which luxury and refinement encourage ; but that is all.

A policeman would as soon think of reconnoitring these secluded streets as of walking into a house in Park Lane or Berkeley Square, to which, in fact, this population in a great measure belongs. For here reside the wives of house-stewards and of butlers, in tenements furnished by the honest savings of their husbands, and let in lodgings to increase their swelling incomes ; here dwells the retired servant, who now devotes his practised energies to the occasional festival, which, with his accumulations in the three per cents., or in one of the public-houses of the quarter, secures him at the same time an easy living, and the casual enjoyment of that great world which lingers in his memory. Here may be found his grace's coachman, and here his lordship's groom, who keeps a book and bleeds periodically too speculative footmen, by betting odds on his master's horses. But, above all, it is in this district that the cooks have ever sought a favourite and elegant abode. An air of stillness and serenity, of exhausted passions and suppressed emotion, rather than of sluggishness and of dullness, distinguishes this quarter during the day.

When you turn from the vitality and brightness of Piccadilly, the park, the palace, the terraced mansions, the sparkling equipages, the cavaliers cantering up the hill, the swarming multitude, and enter the region of which we are speaking, the effect

London's Lure

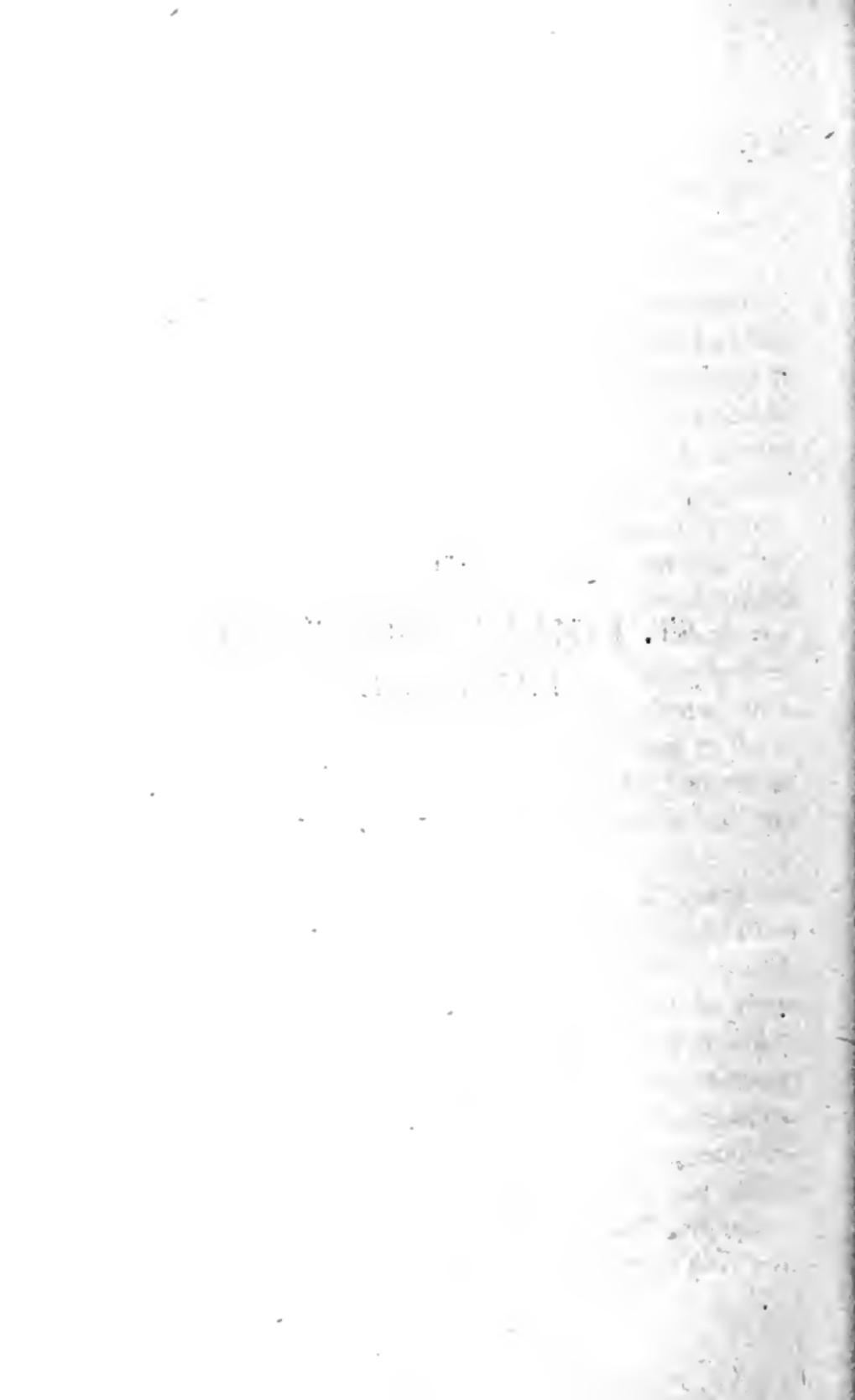
is at first almost unearthly. Not a carriage, not a horseman, scarcely a passenger; there seems some great and sudden collapse in the metropolitan system, as if a pest had been announced, or an enemy were expected in alarm by a vanquished capital. The approach from Curzon Street has not this effect. Hyde Park has still something about it of Arcadia. There are woods and waters, and the occasional illusion of an illimitable distance of sylvan joyance. The spirit is allured to gentle thoughts as we wander in what is still really a lane, and, turning down Stanhope Street, behold that house which the great Lord Chesterfield tells us, in one of his letters, he was "building among the fields." The cawing of the rooks in his gardens sustains the tone of mind, and Curzon Street, after a long, straggling, sawney course, ceasing to be a thoroughfare, and losing itself in the gardens of another place, is quite in keeping with all the accessories.

In the night, however, the quarter of which we are speaking is alive. The manners of the population follow those of their masters. They keep late hours. The banquet and the ball dismiss them to their homes at a time when the tradesmen of the ordinary regions move in their last sleep, and dream of opening shutters and decking the windows of their shops. At night, the chariot whirls round the frequent corners of these little streets, and the opening valves of the mews vomit forth their legion of broughams.

Benjamin Disraeli.

VI

ST. JAMES'S STREET AND
PALL MALL



St. James's Street and Pall Mall

THE BOW-WINDOW AT WHITE'S—I

A T White's

In that bow-window—scandal's favourite seat,
The Inquisition of St. James's Street,
Where bilious questioners await their prey,
And dawdling idlers kill the tedious day.
Where wit and fool, where *bel esprit* and bore,
Together congregate at half-past four.

William, Lord Alvanley.

THE BOW-WINDOW AT WHITE'S—II

S HOT from yon Heavenly Bow, at White's,
No critic-arrow now alights
On some unconscious passer-by,
Whose cape's an inch too low or high;
Whose doctrines are unsound in hat,
In boots, in trousers, or cravat;
On him who braves the shame and guilt
Of gig or Tilbury ill-built;
Sports a barouche with panels darker
Than the last shade turned out by Barker;
Or canters, with an awkward seat
And badly mounted, up the street.
Silenced awhile that dreadful battery
Whence never issued sound of flattery;
That whole artillery of jokes,
Levelled point-blank at hum-drum folks;

London's Lure

Who now, no longer kept in awe
By Fashion's judges, or her law,
Strut by THE WINDOW, at their ease,
With just what looks and clothes they please!

Henry Luttrell.

MARGARET OGILVY ON WEST-END CLUBS

NOW that I was an author I must get into a club. But you should have heard my mother on clubs! She knew of none save those to which you subscribe a pittance weekly in anticipation of rainy days, and the London clubs were her scorn. Often I heard her on them—she raised her voice to make me hear, whichever room I might be in, and it was when she was sarcastic that I skulked the most: “Thirty pounds is what he will have to pay the first year, and ten pounds a year after that. You think it’s a lot o’ siller? Oh no, you’re mista’en—it’s nothing ava. For the third part of thirty pounds you could rent a four-roomed house, but what is a four-roomed house, what is thirty pounds, compared to the glory of being a member of a club? Where does the glory come in? Sal, you needna ask me, I’m just a doited auld stock that never set foot in a club, so it’s little I ken about glory. But I may tell you if you bide in London and canna become member of a club, the best you

St. James's Street and Pall Mall

can do is to tie a rope round your neck and slip out of the world. What use are they? Oh, they're terrible useful. You see it doesna do for a man in London to eat his dinner in his lodgings. Other men shake their heads at him. He maun away to his club if he is to be respected. Does he get good dinners at the club? Oh, they cow! You get no common beef at clubs; there is a manzy of different things all sauced up to be unlike themsels. Even the potatoes daurna look like potatoes. If the food in a club looks like what it is, the members run about, flinging up their hands and crying, 'Woe is me!' Then this is another thing, you get your letters sent to the club instead of to your lodgings. You see you would get them sooner at your lodgings, and you may have to trudge weary miles to the club for them, but that's a great advantage and cheap at thirty pounds, is it not? I wonder they can do it at the price."

J. M. Barrie.

PALL-MALL

BEAR me to the paths of fair *Pell-mell*,
Safe are thy pavements, grateful is thy smell!
At distance rolls along the gilded coach,
Nor sturdy carmen on thy walks encroach;
No lets would bar thy ways were chairs deny'd,
The soft supports of laziness and pride;

London's Lure

Shops breathe perfumes, thro' sashes ribbons glow,
The mutual arms of ladies, and the beau.
Yet still even here, when rains the passage hide,
Oft the loose stone spirits up a muddy tide
Beneath thy careless foot; and from on high,
Where masons mount the ladder, fragments fly:
Mortar, and crumbled lime in show'r's descend,
And o'er thy head destructive tiles impend.

John Gay.

PALL MALL

PALL MALL is the great social Exchange of London now—the mart of news, of politics, of scandal, of rumour—the English forum, so to speak, where men discuss the last despatch from the Crimea, the last speech of Lord Derby, the next move of Lord John. And, now and then, to a few antiquarians whose thoughts are with the past rather than with the present, it is a memorial of old times and old people, and Pall Mall is our Palmyra. Look! About this spot Tom of Ten Thousand was killed by Königsmarck's gang. In that great red house Gainsborough lived, and Culloden Cumberland, George III's uncle. Yonder is Sarah Marlborough's palace, just as it stood when that termagant occupied it. At 25, Walter Scott used to live; at the house, now No. 79, and occupied

St. James's Street and Pall Mall

by the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in Foreign Parts, resided Mrs. Eleanor Gwynn, comedian. How often has Queen Caroline's chair issued from yonder arch! All the men of the Georges have passed up and down the street. It has seen Walpole's chariot, and Chatham's sedan; and Fox, Gibbon, Sheridan, on their way to Brookes's and stately William Pitt stalking on the arm of Dundas; and Hanger and Tom Sheridan reeling out of Raggett's; and Byron limping into Wattier's; and Swift striding out of Bury Street; and Mr. Addison and Dick Steele, both perhaps a little the better for liquor; and the Prince of Wales and the Duke of York clattering over the pavement; and Johnson counting the posts along the streets, after dawdling before Dodsley's window; and Horry Walpole hobbling into his carriage, with a gimcrack just bought at Christie's; and George Selwyn sauntering into White's.

William Makepeace Thackeray.

THE PILGRIMS OF PALL MALL

MY little friend, so small, and neat,
Whom years ago I used to meet
In Pall Mall daily,
How cheerily you tripp'd away
To work; it might have been to play,
You tripp'd so gaily.

London's Lure

And time trips too! This moral means
You then were midway in the teens
 That I was crowning;
We never spoke, but when I smiled
At morn or eve, I know, dear Child,
 You were not frowning.

Each morning that we met, I think
One sentiment did us two link,
 Not joy, not sorrow;
And then at eve, experience-taught,
Our hearts return'd upon the thought,—
 We meet to-morrow!

And you were poor; and how? and why?
How kind to come! it was for my
 Especial grace meant!
Had you a chamber near the stars,
A bird, some treasured plants in jars,
 About your casement?

I often wander up and down,
When morning bathes the silent town
 In golden glory:
Perhaps, unwittingly I've heard
Your thrilling-toned canary-bird
 From some third story.

I've seen great changes since we met;—
A patient little seamstress yet,
 With small means striving,

St. James's Street and Pall Mall

Have you a lilliputian spouse?
And do you dwell in some doll's house?
—Is baby thriving?

Can bloom like thine—my heart grows chill—
Have sought that bourne unwelcome still
To bosom smarting?
The most forlorn—what worms we are!—
Would wish to finish this cigar
Before departing.

Sometimes I to Pall Mall repair,
And see the damsels passing there;
But if I try to
Obtain one glance, they look discreet
As though they'd someone else to meet;—
As have not *I* too?

Yet still I often think upon
Our many meetings, come and gone!
July—December!
Now let us make a tryst, and when,
Dear little soul, we meet again,
The mansion is preparing—then
Thy friend remember!

F. Locker-Lampson.

London's Lure

THE MALL, OR À-LA-MODE

LET your cap be a butterfly slightly hung on,
Like the shell of a lapwing just hatch'd on
your crown;
Behind with a coachhorse short-dock cut your hair,
Stick a flower before, then whiff with an air.
A vandyke in frieze your neck must surround,
Turn your lawns into gauze, let your Brussels be
blonde;
Let your stomacher reach from shoulder to shoulder,
And your breast will appear much fairer and bolder.
Wear a gown or a sack as fancies prevail,
But with flounces or furbelows ruffle your tail.
Set your hoops, shew your stockings and legs to your
knees,
And leave men as little as may be to guess.
For other small ornaments do as before,
Wear ribbons a hundred, and ruffles a score.
Let your talk, like your dress, be fantastic and odd,
And you'll shine in the MALL, 'tis the taste à-la-mode.

Anon.

VII

WESTMINSTER ABBEY AND
ST. PAUL'S CATHEDRAL

1970
1971

Westminster and St. Paul's

FOR ONE WHO WOULD NOT BE BURIED IN WESTMINSTER ABBEY

HEROES, and kings! your distance keep:
In peace let one poor poet sleep,
Who never flattered folk like you:
Let Horace blush, and Virgil too.

Alexander Pope.

WESTMINSTER CHIMES

THOUGH cities cannot charm the soul
With magic of greenly gloomed arcades,
Of Ocean's deep far-booming roll,
Of fields adream with sun, or shades
Slow stealing over the dewy lea,
Yet London lacks not poetry;
She has her voices, whose deep tones
Are human laughter and human moans,
And all her beauty, all her glory,
Spring from or blend with man's strange story.

Here, at the heart of England's life,
The centre of the tragic strife,
Pause a brief while with me, to hear
The chimes which are floating as sweet and clear,
Above the city's rush and roar,
As a wild bird's song by a lakelet's shore;

London's Lure

Sweet and sad is the song they are singing
At Westminster,
While the lusty sun his rays is flinging
On mountain and wood and shining sea,
On the butterfly and the gossamer,
And we stand here
By the Thames and its terrible mystery.

Maxwell Gray.

WESTMINSTER ABBEY

WHEN I am in a serious humour, I very often walk by myself in Westminster Abbey; where the gloominess of the place, and the use to which it is applied, with the solemnity of the building, and the condition of the people who lie in it, are apt to fill the mind with a kind of melancholy, or rather thoughtfulness, that is not disagreeable. I yesterday passed a whole afternoon in the churchyard, the cloisters, and the church, amusing myself with the tombstones and inscriptions that I met with in those several regions of the dead. Most of them recorded nothing else of the buried person, but that he was born upon one day, and died upon another; the whole history of his life being comprehended in those two circumstances, that are common to all mankind. I could not but look upon these registers of existence,

Westminster and St. Paul's

whether of brass or marble, as a kind of satire upon the departed persons; who had left no other memorial of them, but that they were born, and that they died. They put me in mind of several persons mentioned in the battles of heroic poems, who have sounding names given them, for no other reason but that they may be killed; and are celebrated for nothing but being knocked on the head.

Joseph Addison.

LIEN CHI ALTANGI AT WESTMINSTER ABBEY

I AM just returned from Westminster Abbey, the place of sepulture for the philosophers, heroes, and kings of England. What a gloom do monumental inscriptions, and all the venerable remains of deceased merit inspire! Imagine a temple marked with the hand of antiquity, solemn as religious awe, adorned with all the magnificence of barbarous profusion, dim windows, fretted pillars, long colonnades, and dark ceilings. Think, then, what were my sensations at being introduced to such a scene. I stood in the midst of the temple, and threw my eyes round on the walls, filled with the statues, the inscriptions, and the monuments of the dead.

Alas! I said to myself, how does pride attend

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the puny child of dust even to the grave! Even humble as I am, I possess more consequence in the present scene than the greatest hero of them all; they have toiled for an hour to gain a transient immortality, and are at length retired to the grave where they have no attendant but the worm, none to flatter but the epitaph.

Oliver Goldsmith.

THE HALLOWING OF WESTMINSTER

THE night was black, the night was wild,
The dry sedge shuddered in the stream
The minster stood for hallowing piled,
When Osric, ferryman, dreamed a dream.

Of holy things, of angel wings,
Of blossoms sweet and very fair,
Of warbling voice to golden strings,
And soft song thrilling happy air.

“What, ho! good ferryman, what, ho!”
From far a voice called through his dream,
Till Osric sprang awake—“Come, row,
Good boatman, row me o'er the stream.”

A hurried Ave Osric said;
Once more across the blind black night
The far-off cry rang; from his bed
He leapt and ran; his lantern light

Westminster and St. Paul's

He snatched, his rocking boat unmoored,
And shot across the flood, and found
A shrouded form, with staff and gourd
And sandalled feet, on the sedgy ground.

“Gold or silver have I none;
Osric, alone for love of God
Aid me to do what must be done
Before the morning dries the sod.”

“For love of God there is no freight
I would not row from shore to shore.”
The boat plunged deep with the pilgrim's weight;
Stout Osric bent to the bending oar.

Stout Osric pulled the oar amain,
With starting muscle, throbbing heart;
Him seemed beneath the heavy strain,
The blades would crack, the timbers part.

“Abide thou here; when that is done,
That must be done, will I return.”
The stranger is gone, an hour-glass run;
Night stills, the stars in beauty burn.

Doth Osric drowse and dream again,
Or is it music stirs the night?
How pure, how clear that warbled strain,
Lo! all the minsters glow with light.

London's Lure

What odours rare entrance the air,
Sweeter than spice from woodbine flung
To dying day; what sounds are there,
Are those sweet bells by angels rung?

Silence again and midnight mirk:
One stands upon the river-shore,
White-stoled, with haloed head, his work
Fulfilled: him Osric kneels before.

"Osric, alone of mortals, thou
The minster's hallowing hast known;
Arise and give God praise." His brow
The boatman raised; in benison

The holy hands were spread, when lo!
A shrill sound shook the waning night,
Whereat the saint wept: all men know
St. Peter's bird, that brings the light;

St. Peter's warning, all men know,
St. Peter's sorrow: Osric raised
A wonder-smitten face, when lo!
Dumb darkness wheresoe'er he gazed.

With incense, oil and sacring-bell,
With gloss of silk and gleam of gold,
At morn they came: then what befell
At midnight, Osric trembling told.

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The bishops kneel, low kneels the King,
In worship, while the doors spring wide,
Lights burn, bells ring and censers swing,
Song dies, but echoes long abide.

This was the minster's hallowing
Twelve centuries ago and more;
There hearts still daily incense bring,
Still thence doth daily lustre pour.

Maxwell Gray.

WESTMINSTER ABBEY

I ENTERED from the inner court of Westminster School, through a long low, vaulted passage, that had an almost subterranean look, being dimly lighted in one part by circular perforations in the massive walls. Through this dark avenue I had a distant view of the cloisters, with the figure of an old verger, in his black gown, moving along their shadowy vaults, and seeming like a spectre from one of the neighbouring tombs. The approach to the abbey through these gloomy monastic remains prepares the mind for its solemn contemplation. The cloisters still retain something of the quiet and seclusion of former days. The gray walls are discoloured by damps, and crumbling with age; a coat of hoary moss has gathered over the inscriptions of the mural monuments, and obscured

London's Lure

the death's heads and other funereal emblems. The sharp touches of the chisel are gone from the rich tracery of the arches; the roses which adorned the keystones have lost their leafy beauty; everything bears marks of the gradual dilapidations of time, which yet has something touching and pleasing in its very decay.

The sun was pouring down a yellow autumnal ray into the square of the cloisters; beaming upon a scanty plot of grass in the centre, and lighting up an angle of the vaulted passage with a kind of dusky splendour. From between the arcades the eye glanced up to a bit of blue sky, or a passing cloud, and beheld the sun-gilt pinnacles of the abbey towering into the azure heaven.

* * * *

I continued in this way to move from tomb to tomb, and from chapel to chapel. The day was gradually wearing away; the distant tread of loiterers about the abbey grew less and less frequent; the sweet-tongued bell was summoning to evening prayers; and I saw at a distance the choristers, in their white surplices, crossing the aisle and entering the choir. I stood before the entrance to Henry the Seventh's chapel. A flight of steps led up to it, through a deep and gloomy, but magnificent arch. Great gates of brass, richly and delicately wrought, turn heavily upon their hinges, as if proudly reluctant to admit the feet of common mortals into this most gorgeous of sepulchres.

Westminster and St. Paul's

On entering, the eye is astonished by the pomp of architecture, and the elaborate beauty of sculptured detail. The very walls are wrought into universal ornament, incrusted with tracery, and scooped into niches, crowded with the statues of saints and martyrs. Stone seems, by the cunning labour of the chisel, to have been robbed of its weight and density, suspended aloft, as if by magic, and the fretted roof achieved with the wonderful minuteness and airy security of a cobweb.

Along the sides of a chapel are the lofty stalls of the Knights of the Bath, richly carved of oak, though with the grotesque decorations of Gothic architecture. On the pinnacles of the stalls are affixed the helmets and crests of the knights, with their scarfs and swords; and above them are suspended their banners, emblazoned with armorial bearings, and contrasting the splendour of gold and purple and crimson, with the cold gray fretwork of the roof. In the midst of this grand mausoleum stands the sepulchre of its founder—his effigy, with that of his queen, extended on a sumptuous tomb, and the whole surrounded by a superbly wrought brazen railing.

Washington Irving.

London's Lure

ON THE TOMBS IN WEST-MINSTER ABBEY

MORTALITY, behold and fear
What a change of flesh is here!
Think how many royal bones
Sleep within these heaps of stones;
Here they lie, had realms and lands,
Who now want strength to stir their hands,
Where from their pulpits seal'd with dust
They preach, "In greatness is no trust."

Here's an acre sown indeed
With the richest royalist seed
That the earth did e'er suck in
Since the first man died for sin:
Here the bones of birth have cried
"Though gods they were, as men they died!"
Here are sands, ignoble things,
Drop't from the ruin'd sides of kings:
Here's a world of pomp and state
Buried in dust, once dead by fate.

Francis Beaumont.

ST. PAUL'S

THE day, as I have already said, had become very fine, so that I saw the great city to advantage, and the wonders thereof: and much I admired all I saw; and amongst other things, the

Westminster and St. Paul's

huge cathedral, standing so proudly on the most commanding ground in the big city; and I looked up to the mighty dome, surmounted by a golden cross, and I said within myself, "That dome must needs be the finest in the world!" and I gazed upon it till my eyes reeled, and my brain became dizzy; and I thought that the dome would fall and crush me; and I shrank within myself, and struck yet deeper into the heart of the big city.

George Borrow.

ST. PAUL'S

THERE cannot be anything else in its way so good in the world as just this effect of St. Paul's in the very heart and densest tumult of London. I do not know whether the church is built of marble, or of whatever other white or nearly white material; but in the time that it has been standing there, it has grown black with the smoke of ages, through which there are nevertheless gleams of white, that make a most picturesque impression on the whole. It is much better than staring white; the edifice would not be nearly so grand without this drapery of black.

* * * *

Seeing that the door of St. Paul's, under one of the semicircular porches, was partially open, I went in, and found that the afternoon service was

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about to be performed; so I remained to hear it, and to see what I could of the cathedral. What a total and admirable contrast between this and a Gothic church! the latter so dim and mysterious, with its various aisles, its intricacy of pointed arches, its dark walls and columns and pavement, and its painted glass windows, bedimming what daylight might otherwise get into its eternal evening. But this cathedral was full of light, and light was proper to it. There were no painted windows, no dim recesses, but a wide and airy space beneath the dome; and even through the long perspective of the nave there was no obscurity, but one lofty and beautifully rounded arch succeeding to another, as far as the eye could reach. The walls were white, the pavement constructed of squares of gray and white marble. It is a most grand and stately edifice, and its characteristic seems to be to continue for ever fresh and new; whereas such a church as Westminster Abbey must have been as venerable as it is now from the first day when it grew to be an edifice at all. How wonderful man is in his works! How glad I am that there can be two such admirable churches, in their opposite styles, as St. Paul's and Westminster Abbey!

* * * * *

It is pleasant to stand in the centre of the cathedral, and hear the noise of London, loudest all round this spot—how it is calmed into a sound as proper to be heard through the aisles as the

Westminster and St. Paul's

tones of its own organ. If St. Paul's were to be burnt again (having already been burnt, and risen three or four times since the sixth century), I wonder whether it would ever be rebuilt in the same spot! I doubt whether the City and the nation are so religious as to consecrate their midmost heart for the site of a church, where land would be so valuable by the square inch.

Nathaniel Hawthorne.

HOLY THURSDAY

'TWAS on a holy Thursday, their innocent faces
clean,
The children walking to and fro, in red, and
blue, and green:
Gray-headed beadles walked before, with wands as
white as snow,
Till into the high dome of Paul's they like Thames
waters flow.

O what a multitude they seemed, these flowers of
London Town!
Seated in companies they sit, with radiance all
their own.
The hum of multitudes was there, but multitudes
of lambs,
Thousands of little boys and girls raising their
innocent hands.

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Now like a mighty wind they raise to heaven the
voice of song,
Or like harmonious thunderings the seats of heaven
among:
Beneath them sit the aged men, wise guardians of
the poor.
Then perish pity, lest you drive an angel from your
door.

William Blake.

CHARITY CHILDREN'S DAY AT ST. PAUL'S

THERE is one day in the year . . . when I think St. Paul's presents the noblest sight in the whole world: when five thousand charity children, with cheeks like nosegays, and sweet, fresh voices, sing the hymn which makes every heart thrill with praise and happiness. I have seen a hundred grand sights in the world—coronations, Parisian splendours, Crystal Palace openings, Pope's chapels with their processions of long-tailed cardinals and quavering choirs of fat *soprani*—but think in all Christendom there is no such sight as Charity Children's Day. *Non Angli, sed angeli.* As one looks at that beautiful multitude of innocents: as the first note strikes: indeed one may almost fancy that cherubs are singing.

William Makepeace Thackeray.

Westminster and St. Paul's
MORAL REFLECTIONS ON THE
CROSS OF ST. PAUL'S

I

THE man that pays his pence, and goes
Up to thy lofty cross, St. Paul,
Looks over London's naked nose,
Women and men:
The world is all beneath his ken,
He sits above the *Ball*.
He seems on Mount Olympus' top,
Among the Gods, by Jupiter! and lets drop
His eyes from the empyreal clouds
On mortal crowds.

II

Seen from these skies,
How small those emmets in our eyes!
Some carry little sticks—and one
His eggs—to warm them in the sun:
Dear! what a hustle,
And bustle!
And there's my aunt. I know her by her waist,
So long and thin,
And so pinched in,
Just in the pismire taste.

III

Oh! what are men?—Beings so small,
That, should I fall

London's Lure

Upon their little heads, I must
Crush them by hundreds into dust!

IV

And what is life? and all its ages—
There's seven stages!
Turnham Green! Chelsea! Putney! Fulham!
Brentford! and Kew!
And Tooting, too!
And oh! what very little nags to pull 'em
Yet each would seem a horse indeed,
If here at Paul's tip-top we'd got 'em;
Although, like Cinderella's breed,
They're mice at bottom.
Then let me not despise a horse,
Though he look small from Paul's high cross!
Since he would be—as near the sky,
—Fourteen hands high.

V

What is this world with London in its lap?
Mogg's Map.
The Thames that ebbs and flowin its broad channel?
A *tidy* kennel.
The bridges stretching from its banks?
Stone planks.
Oh me! hence could I read an admonition
To mad Ambition!
But that he would not listen to my call,
Though I should stand upon the cross and *ball*!

Thomas Hood.

VIII

THE STRAND, COVENT GARDEN
AND THE INNS OF COURT

СИДОРЧУК ВІКТОР ІВАНЕНКО
ВІДОВЛІ СІДОРЧУК

The Strand—The Inns of Court

THE STRAND

THRO' the long *Strand* together let us stray:
With thee conversing I forget the way.
Behold that narrow street which steep descends,
Whose building to the slimy shore extends;
Here *Arundel's* fam'd structure rear'd its frame,
The street alone retains an empty name;
Where *Titian's* glowing paint the canvas warm'd,
And *Raphael's* fair design, with judgment, charm'd,
Now hangs the bellman's song, and pasted here
The colour'd prints of *Overton* appear.
Where statues breath'd, the works of *Phidias'* hands,
A wooden pump, or lonely watch-house stands.
There *Essex'* stately pile adorn'd the shore,
There *Cecil's*, *Bedford's*, *Villier's*, now no more.
Yet *Burlington's* fair palace still remains;
Beauty within, without proportion reigns.
Beneath his eye declining art revives,
The wall with animated picture lives;
There *Handel* strikes the strings, the melting strain
Transports the soul, and thrills thro' every vein;
There oft I enter (but with cleaner shoes)
For *Burlington's* belov'd by ev'ry Muse.

John Gay.

London's Lure

ST. CLEMENT'S

WHERE the fair columns of St. *Clement* stand,
Whose straiten'd bounds encroach upon the
Strand;

Where the low penthouse bows the walker's head,
And the rough pavement wounds the yielding tread;
Where not a post protects the narrow space,

And strung in twines, combs dangle in thy face;

Summon at once thy courage, rouze thy care,

Stand firm, look back, be resolute, beware.

Forth issuing from steep lanes, the collier's steeds

Drag the black load; another cart succeeds,

Team follows team, crouds heap'd on crouds appear

And wait impatient till the road grow clear.

Now all the pavement sounds with trampling feet,
And the mixt hurry barricades the street.

Entangled here, the waggon's lengthen'd team

Cracks the tough harness; here a pond'rous beam

Lies overturn'd athwart; for slaughter fed

Here lowing bullocks raise their horned head.

Now oaths grow loud, with coaches coaches jar,

And the smart blow provokes the sturdy war;

From the high box they whirl the thong around,

And with the twining lash their shins resound:

Their rageferments, more dangerous wounds they try,

And the blood gushes down their painful eye.

And now on foot the frowning warriors light,

And with their pond'rous fists renew the fight;

The Strand—The Inns of Court

Blow answers blow, their cheeks are smear'd with
blood,
Till down they fall, and grappling roll in mud.

John Gay.

COVENT GARDEN

COVENT GARDEN market has always been the most agreeable in the metropolis, because it is devoted exclusively to fruit, flowers, and vegetables. A few crockery-ware shops make no exception to this "bloodless" character. The seasons here regularly present themselves in their most gifted looks,—with evergreens in winter, the fresh verdure of spring, all the hues of summer, and whole loads of desserts in autumn. The country girls who bring the things to market at early dawn are a sight themselves worthy of the apples and roses; the good-natured Irish women who attend to carry baskets for purchasers are not to be despised, with the half humorous, half pathetic tone of their petitions to be employed; and the ladies who come to purchase crown all. No walk in London, on a fine summer's day, is more agreeable than the passage through the flowers here at noon, when the roses and green leaves are newly watered, and blooming faces come to look at them in those cool and shady avenues, while the hot sun is basking in the streets. On these occasions we were very well satisfied with

London's Lure

the market in its old state. The old sheds and irregular avenues, when dry, assorted well with the presence of leaves and fruits. They had a careless picturesque look, as if a bit of an old suburban garden had survived from ancient times.

William Hazlitt.

COVENT GARDEN

WHERE *Covent Garden's* famous temple stands,
That boasts the work of *Jones'* immortal
hands;

Columns with plain magnificence appear,
And graceful porches lead along the square:
Here oft my course I bend, when lo! from far,
I spy the furies of the football war:
The 'prentice quits his shop, to join the crew,
Encreasing crouds the flying game pursue.
Thus, as you roll the ball o'er snowy ground,
The gath'ring globe augments with ev'ry round.
But whither shall I run? the throng draws nigh,
The ball now skims the street, now soars on high;
The dext'rous glazier strong returns the bound,
And gingling sashes on the pent-house sound.

John Gay.

The Strand—The Inns of Court

THE GARDENS OF GRAY'S INN

I AM ill at dates, but I think it is now better than five-and-twenty years ago that walking in the gardens off Gray's Inn—they were then far finer than they are now—the accursed Verulam Buildings had not encroached upon all the east side of them, cutting out delicate green crannies, and shouldering away one or two of the stately alcoves of the terrace—the survivor stands gaping and relationless as if it remembered its brother—they are still the best gardens of any of the Inns of Court, my beloved Temple not forgotten—have the gravest character, their aspect being altogether reverend and law-breathing. Bacon has left the impress of his foot upon their gravel walks.

Charles Lamb.

LINCOLN'S INN

WHERE *Lincoln's Inn*, wide space, is rail'd around,
Cross not with vent'rous step; there oft is found
The lurking thief, who while the day-light shone,
Made the walls echo with his begging tone:
That crutch which late compassion mov'd, shall wound
Thy bleeding head, and fell thee to the ground.
Though thou art tempted by the link-man's call,
Yet trust him not along the lonely wall;
In the mid-way he'll quench the flaming brand,

London's Lure

And share the booty with the pilf'ring band.
Still keep the publick streets, where oily rays
Shot from the crystal lamp, o'erspread the ways.

John Gay.

OLD CLEMENT'S INN

BRED up, like a bailiff or a shabby attorney, about the purlieus of the Inns of Court, Shepherd's Inn is always to be found in the close neighbourhood of Lincoln's-Inn-Fields, and the Temple. Somewhere behind the black gables and smutty chimney-stacks of Wych Street, Holywell Street, Chancery Lane, the quadrangle lies, hidden from the outer world; and it is approached by curious passages and ambiguous smoky alleys, on which the sun has forgotten to shine. Slop-sellers, brandy-ball and hard-bake vendors, purveyors of theatrical prints for youth, dealers in dingy furniture and bedding suggestive of anything but sleep, line the narrow walls and dark casements with their wares. The doors are many-belled: and crowds of dirty children form endless groups upon the steps: or around the shell-fish dealers' trays in these courts; whereof the damp pavements resound with pattens, and are drabbled with a never-failing mud. Ballad-singers come and chant here, in deadly guttural tones, satirical songs against the Whig administration, against the bishops and dignified clergy, against the German relatives of an august royal

The Strand—The Inns of Court

family: Punch sets up his theatre, sure of an audience, and occasionally of a halfpenny from the swarming occupants of the houses: women scream after their children for loitering in the gutter, or, worse still, against the husband who comes reeling from the gin-shop;—there is a ceaseless din and life in these courts, out of which you pass into the tranquil, old-fashioned quadrangle of Shepherd's Inn. In a mangy little grass-plot in the centre rises up the statue of Shepherd, defended by iron railings from the assault of boys. The hall of the Inn, on which the founder's arms are painted occupies one side of the square, the tall and ancient chambers are carried round other two sides, and over the central archway, which leads into Oldcastle Street, and so into the great London thoroughfare.

William Makepeace Thackeray.

THE TEMPLE

INDEED, it is the most elegant spot in the metropolis. What a transition for a countryman visiting London for the first time—the passing from the crowded Strand or Fleet Street, by unexpected avenues, into its magnificent ample squares, its classic green recesses! What a cheerful, liberal look hath that portion of it, which, from three sides overlooks the greater garden; that goodly pile

“Of building strong, albeit of Paper hight,”

London's Lure

confronting, with massy contrast, the lighter, older, more fantastically shrouded one, named of Harcourt, with the cheerful Crown-office Row (place of my kindly engendure), right opposite the stately stream which washes the garden-foot with her yet scarcely trade-polluted waters, and seems but just weaned from her Twickenham Naiades! a man would give something to have been born in such places. What a collegiate aspect has that fine Elizabethan hall, where the fountain plays, which I have made to rise and fall, how many times! to the astoundment of the young urchins, my contemporaries, who, not being able to guess at its recondite machinery, were almost tempted to hail the wondrous work as magic! What an antique air had the now almost defaced sun-dials, with their moral inscriptions, seeming coevals with that Time which they measured, and to take their revelations of its flight immediately from heaven, holding correspondence with the fountain of light! How would the dark line steal imperceptibly on watched by the eye of childhood, eager to detect its movement, never catched, nice as an evanescent cloud, or the first arrests of sleep!

Charles Lamb.

The Strand—The Inns of Court

THE TEMPLE

THE man of letters can't but love the place which has been inhabited by so many of his brethren, and peopled by their creations as real to us at this day as the authors whose children they were—and Sir Rogerde Coverley walking in the Temple Garden, and discoursing with Mr. Spectator about the beauties in hoops and patches who are sauntering over the grass, is just as lively a figure to me as old Samuel Johnson rolling through the fog with the Scotch gentleman at his heels on their way to Mr. Goldsmith's chambers in Brick Court; or Harry Fielding, with inked ruffles and a wet towel round his head, dashing off articles at midnight for the *Covent Garden Journal* while the printer's boy is asleep in the passage.

William Makepeace Thackeray.

THE LONG VACATION

IT is the long vacation in the regions of Chancery Lane... The Temple, Chancery Lane, Serjeants' Inn, and Lincoln's Inn even unto the Fields, are like tidal harbours at low-water; where stranded proceedings, offices at anchor, idle clerks lounging on lop-sided stools that will not recover their perpendicular until the current of Term sets in, lie high and dry upon the ooze of the long vacation. Outer

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doors of chambers are shut up by the score, messages and parcels are to be left at the Porter's Lodge by the bushel. A crop of grass would grow in the chinks of the stone pavement outside Lincoln's Inn Hall, but that the ticket-porters, who have nothing to do beyond sitting in the shade there, with their white aprons over their heads to keep the flies off, grub it up and eat it thoughtfully.

Charles Dickens.

IX
MEAN STREETS



Mean Streets

THE THREE WOMEN OF ENDELL STREET

AFTER the days of the northern rain,
The sun stepped yellow and merry again
Between Endell Street and Drury Lane.

His feet were warm on the pavement there,
He drew bright hands through the children's hair,
And the windows gleamed like gossamer.

He lit on Queen Charlotte's Hospital,
And the children's eyrie behind its wall:
There Endell Street ends, but that is not all.

Hard by are two churches; a workhouse then;
Some baths not intended for gentlemen;
And public houses—some nine or ten.

From one of the houses—I change the name
And call it the "Lion"—three women came;
And I laughed aloud as I looked at them.

With untold graces, they sidled and smiled;
One arm, bacchantic, the air beguiled;
On the other, black-shawled, each bore a child.

At first I laughed, and then changed blood;
For there are three graces that men hold good,
But the fourth and the fairest is motherhood.

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With eyes ensanguined, with feet of lead,
And a song from which the heavens had fled.
They danced the dance of the Quick-in-the-Dead.

They becked to each other, and bowed like mimes;
And joined their voices—three tunes, three times,
With terrible gestures and horrible rhymes.

They reeled till I thought the babes would drop,
Whose mammet faces looked drearily up,
Accusing High Heaven above the town-top.

* * * * *

What things are they that a babe should see?—
Green grass, I think, and a growing tree,
And the sea-sand washed continually.

And a bright-eyed mother, so wondrous kind,
She would win the air and woo the wind,
To bring her babe one joy to its mind.

But these—oh, mournful mother of men!
What joy had their eyes of the dancers who then
Within the dread doorways went dancing again?

The three women went;—their three babes stay;
They rise up like ghosts on the sunlit day,
And the sun on the windows is clouded away.

Oh, Trojan women of our new Troy,
That build its walls for glory and joy—
What doom for the cities that babes destroy?

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Make now a song of a broken charm,
To keep the soul of the babe from harm,
That hangs, unloved, on its mother's arm.

Ernest Rhys.

A MEAN STREET IN BLOOMSBURY

PRESENTLY in many fanlights they saw the mystic legend "Apartments." Then there were buildings that had an aged air and sported broken windows. Occasionally, on a background of red glass lit by a gas jet from behind, sat the word "Hotel." A certain grimy degradation swam in the atmosphere of these streets. Their aspect was subtly different from the Bloomsbury thoroughfares, which look actively church-going, and are full of the shadows of an everlasting respectability which pays its water-rates and sends occasional conscience money to the Chancellor of the Exchequer. People looked furtive, and went in and out of the houses furtively. They crawled rather than pranced, and their bodies bore themselves with a depression that seemed indiscreet. Occasional men with dripping umbrellas knocked at the doors under the red glass, and disappeared into narrow passages inhabited by small iron umbrella-stands. Night brooded here like a dyspeptic raven with moulting tail feathers and ragged wings. But London is eloquent of surprises. The cab turned

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a corner, and instantly they were in a wide and rain-swept street, long and straight and lined with reserved houses, that shrank back from the publicity of the passing traffic at the end of narrow alleys protected by iron gates. Over many of these gates appeared lit arches of glass on which names were inscribed: "Albion Hotel," "Valetta Hotel," "Imperial Hotel,"—"Cosmopolitan Hotel" great names for small houses. These houses had front doors with glass panels, and all the panels glowed dimly with gas.

Robert Hichens.

C ALEDONIAN ROAD is a great channel of traffic running directly north from King's Cross to Holloway. It is doubtful whether London can show any thoroughfare of importance more offensive to eye and ear and nostril. You stand at the entrance to it, and gaze into a region of supreme ugliness; every house front is marked with meanness and inveterate grime; every shop seems breaking forth with mould or dry rot; the people who walk here appear one and all to be employed in labour that soils body and spirit. Journey on the top of a tram-car from King's Cross to Holloway, and civilization has taught you its utmost achievement in ignoble hideousness. You look off into narrow side channels where unconscious degradation has made its inexpugnable home, and sits veiled with

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refuse. You pass above lines of railway, which cleave the region with black-breathing fissure. You see the pavements half occupied with the paltriest and most sordid wares; the sign of the pawnbroker is on every hand; the public-houses look and reek more intolerably than in other places. The population is dense, the poverty is undisguised. All this northward-bearing track, between Camden Town on the one hand and Islington on the other, is the valley of the vilest servitude. Its public monument is a cyclopean prison; save for the desert around the Great Northern Goods Depot, its only open ground is a malodorous cattle-market. In comparison, Lambeth is picturesque and venerable, St. Giles's is romantic, Hoxton is clean and suggestive of domesticity, Whitechapel is full of poetry, Limehouse is sweet with sea-breathings.

George Gissing.

CAMDEN TOWN

THAT great outcome of one side of British genius is one of the first things which an intelligent foreigner should be taken to see. As an example of the national genius displayed in architecture, I conceive that it is unequalled in Europe, and also in America; and in this opinion I am confirmed, after consultation, by intelligent travellers, who go with me in saying that it is absolutely unique. There is a depth of vulgarity about it

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with which the Nevskoi Prospect and the Haussmann Boulevards compete but feebly. The Russian and the Frenchman have each made an effort at soulless, characterless vulgarity, but they have failed because they have brought in the element of size or bigness, the only thing which saves Niagara from being one of the ugliest cascades in the world. Now, in Camden Town, we have surpassed ourselves. We have had the daring greatness to be little, mean and low. We have banished all possibility of a man's expressing his character in the shape of his house: that is nothing—have not mere French prefects done the same? But we have done more. Over hundreds of acres we have adopted a style of housebuilding which is, I believe actually unique in the history of the world. The will and genius of a nation often—nay generally—expresses itself in architecture. Nineveh, Paris, San Francisco, St. Petersburg, Pitt Street, Sydney, the Pyramids, are all cases in point. With regard to Axum, of the Ethiopians, and Caracorum, of the Tartars, one has little reliable information, but I have no doubt that they would bear this out, and assist one in rendering the theory arguable, that the genius of a nation generally expresses itself in its houses.

It would be unwise to commit one's-self. With Chatsworth and Buckingham Palace before us, it could not be asserted that the very curious taste for gregarious vulgarity of opinion among the least vulgar, and really the most independent people in

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the world, has culminated at Camden Town. It is possible to say that, if Arminius were to see Camden Town he would remark, "Here is the genius of the English nation in bricks and mortar. Stone don't pay. You can't get at best more than four per cent. out of fair Ashlar, and you ought never to build under seven."

Yet there are about one million people, of good education, who live in these Philistine ghettos in London, and never grumble. Is there any reader who does not know some family living in one of these artistically abominable terraces—some family shut up, with not too much money, in a hideous brick box—a family which, in spite of its inartistic surroundings, exhibits every form of gentleness and goodness? Any reader who does not know such a family is exceptionally unfortunate.

Some, whose souls are elsewhere, never think of its being inartistic and squalid. Others, the people who habitually eat their hearts, beat against such a prison like caged tigers.

Henry Kingsley.

ST. GILES'S

WHERE famed St. Giles's ancient limits spread
An inrail'd column rears its lofty head,
Here to sev'n streets sev'n dials count the day,
And from each other catch the circling ray.

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Here oft the peasant, with enquiring face,
Bewilder'd, trudges on from place to place;
He dwells on ev'ry sign with stupid gaze,
Enters the narrow alley's doubtful maze,
Tries ev'ry winding court and street in vain,
And doubles o'er his weary steps again.
Thus hardy *Theseus* with intrepid feet,
Travers'd the dang'rous labyrinth of *Crete*;
But still the wand'ring passes forc'd his stay,
Till *Ariadne's* clue unwinds the way.
But do not thou, like that bold chief, confide
Thy vent'rous footsteps to a female guide;
She'll lead thee with delusive smiles along,
Dive in thy fob, and drop thee in the throng.

John Gay.

THE EAST END

TWO millions of people, or thereabouts, live in the East End of London. That seems a good-sized population for an utterly unknown town. They have no institutions of their own to speak of, no public buildings of any importance, no municipality, no gentry, no carriages, no soldiers, no picture-galleries, no theatres, no opera—they have nothing. It is the fashion to believe that they are all paupers, which is a foolish and mischievous belief as we shall presently see. Probably there is no such

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spectacle in the whole world as that of this immense, neglected, forgotten great city of East London. It is even neglected by its own citizens, who have never yet perceived their abandoned condition. They are Londoners, it is true, but they have no part or share of London; its wealth, its splendours, its honours exist not for them. They see nothing of any splendours; even the Lord Mayor's Show goes westward; the city lies between them and the greatness of England. They are beyond the wards, and cannot become aldermen; the rich London merchants go north and south and west; but they go not east. Nobody goes east, no one wants to see the place; no one is curious about the way of life in the east. Books on London pass it over; it has little or no history; great men are not buried in its churchyards, which are not even ancient, and crowded by citizens as obscure as those who now breathe the upper airs about them. If anything happens in the east, people at the other end have to stop and think before they can remember where the place may be.

Sir Walter Besant.

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"PETTICOAT LANE"

TWO opposing currents of heavy-laden pedestrians were endeavouring in their progress to occupy the same strip of pavement at the same moment, and the laws of space kept them blocked till they yielded to its remorseless conditions. Rich and poor elbowed one another; ladies in satins and furs were jammed against wretched-looking foreign women with their heads swathed in dirty handkerchiefs; rough, red-faced English betting-men struggled good-humouredly with their greasy kindred from over the North Sea; and a sprinkling of Christian yokels surveyed the Jewish hucksters and chapmen with amused superiority.

For this was the night of nights, when purchases were made for the Festival, and great ladies of the West, leaving behind their daughters who played the piano and had a subscription at Mudie's, came down again to the beloved Lane to throw off the veneer of refinement, and plunge gloveless hands in barrels where pickled cucumbers weltered in their own *Russel*, and to pick fat juicy olives from the rich-heaped tubs. Ah me! what a tragi-comedy lay behind the transient happiness of these sensuous faces, laughing and munching with the shamelessness of school-girls! For to-night they need not hanker in silence after the flesh-pots of Egypt. To-night they could laugh and talk over *Olov Hasholom* times—"Peace be upon him!"

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times—with their old cronies, and loosen the stays of social ambition, even while they dazzled the Ghetto with the splendours of their get-up and the halo of the West End whence they came. It was a scene without parallel in the history of the world—this phantasmagoria of grubs and butterflies, met together for auld lang syne in their beloved hatching-place. Such violent contrasts of wealth and poverty as might be looked for in romantic gold-fields or in unsettled countries were evolved quite naturally amid a colourless civilisation by a people with an incurable talent for the picturesque.

Israel Zangwill.

WHITECHAPEL ROAD

FROM Stepney Green to the Trinity Almshouse is not a long way; you have, in fact, little more than to pass through a short street and to cross the road. But the road itself is noteworthy: for, of all the roads which lead into London or out of it, this of Whitechapel is the broadest and noblest by nature. Man, it is true, has done little to embellish it. There are no avenues of green and spreading lime and plane trees, as, one day, there shall be: there are no stately buildings, towers, spires, miracles of architecture; but only houses and shops which, whether

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small or big, are all alike mean, unlovely and depressing. Yet, in spite of all, a noble road.

This road, which is the promenade, breathing-place, place of resort, place of gossip, place of amusement, and place of business for the greater part of East London, stretches all the way from Aldgate to Stratford, being called first the Whitechapel Road, and then the Mile End Road; then the Bow Road, and then the Stratford Road. Under the first name the road has acquired a reputation of the class called, by moralists, unenviable. The history of police-court records, under the general heading of Whitechapel Road, so many free fights, brave robberies, gallant murders, dauntless kickings, cudgellings, pummellings, pocket-pickings, shop-liftings, watch-snatchings, and assaults on constables, with such a brave display of disorderly drunks, that the road has come to be regarded with admiration as one of those Alsatian retreats growing every day rarer, which are beyond and above the law. It is thought to be a place where manhood and personal bravery reign supreme. Yet the road is not worthy of this reputation: it has of late years become orderly; its present condition is dull and law-abiding, brilliant as the past has been and whatever greatness may be in store for the future. Once out of Whitechapel, and within the respectable region of Mile End, the road has always been eminently respectable; and as regards dangers quite safe, ever since they built

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the bridge over the River Lea, which used now and again to have freshets, and, at such times, tried to drown harmless people in its ford. Since that bridge was built in the time of Edward I, it matters not for the freshets. There is not much in the Bow Road when the stranger gets there, in his journey along this great thoroughfare, for him to visit, except its almshouses, which are many; and the beautiful old church of Bow, standing in the middle of the road, crumbling slowly away in the East End fog, with its narrow strip of crowded churchyard. One hopes that before it has quite crumbled away someone will go and make a picture of it—an etching would be best. At Stratford the road divides, so that you may turn to the right and get to Barking, or to the left and get to Epping Forest. And all the way, for four miles, a broad and noble road, which must have been carved originally out of No Man's Land, in so generous a spirit is it laid out.

Sir Walter Besant.

MONMOUTH STREET

OFTEN while I sojourned in that monstrous tuberosity of Civilised Life, the Capital of England; and meditated, and questioned Destiny, under that ink-sea of vapour, black, thick, and multifarious as Spartan broth; and was one

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lone soul amid those grinding millions;—often have I turned into their Old-Clothes Market to worship. With awe-struck heart I walk through that Monmouth Street, with its empty Suits, as through a Sanhedrim of stainless Ghosts. Silent are they, but expressive in their silence: the past witnesses and instruments of Woe and Joy, of Passions, Virtues, Crimes, and all the fathomless tumult of Good and Evil in “the Prison men call Life.” Friends! I trust not the heart of that man for whom Old Clothes are not venerable. Watch, too, with reverence, that bearded Jewish High-priest, who with hoarse voice, like some Angel of Doom, summons them from the four winds! On his head, like the Pope, he has three Hats,—a real triple tiara; on either hand are the similitude of wings, whereon the summoned Garments come to alight; and ever, as he slowly cleaves the air, sounds forth his deep fateful note, as if through a trumpet he were proclaiming: “Ghosts of Life, come to Judgment!” Reck not, ye fluttering Ghosts: he will purify you in his Purgatory, with fire and with water; and, one day, new-created ye shall reappear. O, let him in whom the flame of Devotion is ready to go out, who has never worshipped, pace and repace, with austerest thought, the pavement of Monmouth Street, and say whether his heart and his eyes still continue dry. If Field Lane, with its long fluttering rows of yellow handkerchiefs, be a Dionysius’ Ear, where,

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in stifled jarring hubbub, we hear the Indictment which Poverty and Vice bring against lazy Wealth, that it has left them there cast-out and trodden under foot of Want, Darkness and the Devil,—then is Monmouth Street a Mirza's Hill, wherein, in motley vision, the whole Pageant of Existence passes awfully before us; with its wail and jubilee, mad loves and mad hatreds, church-bells and gallows-ropes, farce-tragedy, beast-godhood,—the Bedlam of Creation!

Thomas Carlyle.

STEPNEY GREEN

PERHAPS, indeed, there are not many places in London where sunset does produce such good effects as at Stepney Green. The narrow strip, so called, in shape resembles too nearly a closed umbrella or a thickish walking-stick; but there are trees in it, and beds of flowers, and seats for those who wish to sit, and walks for those who wish to walk. And the better houses of the Green are on the east and face the setting sun. They are of a good age, at least a hundred and fifty years old; they are built of a warm red brick, and some have doors ornamented with the old-fashioned shell, and all have an appearance of solid respectability, which makes the rest of Stepney proud of them. Here, in former days, dwelt the aristocracy of the

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parish. . . . The reason why the sunsets are more splendid and the sunrises brighter at Stepney than at the opposite end of London, is, that the sun sets behind the great bank of cloud which for ever lies over London town. This lends his departure to the happy dwellers of the East strange and wonderful effects. Now, when he rises, it is naturally in the East, where there is no cloud of smoke to hide the brightness of his face.

Sir Walter Besant.

AN EAST-END MARKET

IT was market-morning. The ground was covered, nearly ankle-deep, with filth and mire; a thick steam, perpetually rising from the reeking bodies of the cattle, and mingling with the fog, which seemed to rest upon the chimney-tops, hung heavily above. All the pens in the centre of the large area, and as many temporary pens as could be crowded into the vacant space, were filled with sheep; tied up to posts by the gutter side were long lines of beasts and oxen, three or four deep. Countrymen, butchers, drovers, hawkers, boys, thieves, idlers, and vagabonds of every low grade, were mingled together in a mass; the whistling of drovers, the barking of dogs, the bellowing and plunging of oxen, the bleating of sheep, the grunting and squeaking of pigs, the cries of hawkers,

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the shouts, oaths, and quarrelling on all sides; the ringing of bells and roar of voices, that issued from every public-house; the crowding, pushing, driving, beating, whooping, and yelling; the hideous and discordant din that resounded from every corner of the market; and the unwashed, unshaven, squalid, and dirty figures constantly running to and fro, and bursting in and out of the throng; rendered it a stunning and bewildering scene, which quite confounded the senses.

Charles Dickens.

THE MUSIC OF THE SLUMS

D O you know that music of the obscure ways, to which children dance? Not if you have only heard it ground to your ears' affliction beneath your windows in the square. To hear it aright you must stand in the darkness of such a by-street as this and for the moment be at one with those who dwell around, in the blear-eyed houses, in the dim burrows of poverty, in the unmapped haunts of the semi-human. Then you will know the significance of that vulgar clangor of melody; a pathos of which you did not dream will touch you, and therein the secret of hidden London will be half revealed. The life of men who toil without hope, yet with the hunger of an unshaped desire; of women in whom the sweetness

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of their sex is perishing under labour and misery; the laugh, the song of the girl who strives to enjoy her year or two of youthful vigour, knowing the darkness of the years to come; the careless defiance of the youth who feels his blood and revolts against the lot which would tame it; all that is purely human in these darkened multitudes speaks to you as you listen. It is the half-conscious striving of a nature which knows not what it would attain, which deforms a true thought by gross expression, which clutches at the beautiful and soils it with foul hands.

George Gissing.

“SEDAN BUILDINGS”

SEDAN BUILDINGS is a little flagged square, ending abruptly with the huge walls of BLUCK's Brewery. The houses, by many degrees smaller than the large decayed tenements in Great Guelph Street, are still not uncomfortable, although shabby. There are brass-plates on the doors, two on some of them; or simple names, as “LUNT,” “PADGEMORE,” etc. (as if no other statement about LUNT and PADGEMORE were necessary at all), under the high bells. There are pictures of mangles before two of the houses, and a gilt arm with a hammer sticking out from one. I never saw a Goldbeater. What sort of a being is

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he that he always sticks out his ensign in dark, mouldy, lonely, dreary, but somewhat respectable places? What powerful Mulciberian fellows they must be, those Goldbeaters, whacking and thumping with huge mallets at the precious metals all day. I wonder what is Goldbeaters' skin? and do they get impregnated with the metal? and are their great arms under their clean shirts on Sunday, all gilt and shining?

It is a quiet, kind, respectable place, somehow, in spite of its shabbiness. Two pewter pints and a jolly little half-pint are hanging on the railings in perfect confidence, basking in what little sun comes into the Court. A group of small children are making an ornament of oyster-shells in one corner. Who has that half-pint? Is it for one of those small ones, or for some delicate female recommended to take beer? The windows in the Court, upon some of which the sun glistens, are not cracked, and pretty clean; it is only the black and dreary look behind which gives them a poverty-stricken appearance. No curtains or blinds. A bird-cage and a very few pots of flowers here and there. This—with the exception of a milkman talking to a whitey-brown woman, made up of bits of flannel and strips of faded chintz and calico seemingly, and holding a long bundle which cried—this was all I saw in Sedan Buildings while we were waiting until the door should open.

William Makepeace Thackeray.



X
THE CITY



The City

BOW BELLS

A T the brink of a murmuring brook
A contemplative Cockney reclined;
And his face wore a sad sort of look,
As if care were at work on his mind.
He sighed now and then as we sigh
When the heart with soft sentiment swells;
And a tear came and moisten'd each eye
As he mournfully thought of Bow Bells.

I am monarch of all I survey!
(Thus he vented his feelings in words)—
But my kingdom, it grieves me to say,
Is inhabited chiefly by birds.
In this brook that flows lazily by,
I believe that *one* tittlebat dwells,
For I saw something jump at a fly
As I lay here and long'd for Bow Bells.

Yonder cattle are grazing—it's clear
From the bob of their heads up and down;—
But I cannot love cattle down here
As I should if I met them in town.
Poets say that each pastoral breeze
Bears a melody laden with spells;
But I don't find the music in these
That I find in the tone of Bow Bells.

I am partial to trees as a rule;
And the rose is a beautiful flower.

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(Yes, I once read a ballad at school
 Of a rose that was wash'd in a shower.)
But, although I may doat on the rose,
 I can scarcely believe that it smells
Quite so sweet in the bed where it grows
 As when sold within sound of Bow Bells.

No; I've tried it in vain once or twice,
 And I've thoroughly made up my mind
That the country is all very nice—
 But I'd much rather mix with my kind.
Yes; to-day—if I meet with a train—
 I will fly from these hills and these dells;
And to-night I will sleep once again
 (Happy thought!) within sound of Bow Bells.

Henry S. Leigh.

CHEAPSIDE

“O CHEAPSIDE! Cheapside!” said I, as I advanced up that mighty thoroughfare, “truly thou art a wonderful place for hurry, noise, and riches! Men talk of the bazaars of the East—I have never seen them—but I daresay that, compared with thee, they are poor places, silent places, abounding with empty boxes, O thou pride of London's east!—mighty mart of old renown!—for thou art not a place of yesterday:—long before the Roses red and white battled in fair England, thou didst exist—a place of throng and bustle—a place of gold and silver, perfumes and fine linen. Cen-

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turies ago thou couldst extort the praises even of the fiercest foes of England. Fierce bards of Wales, sworn foes of England, sang thy praises centuries ago; and even the fiercest of them all, Red Julius himself, wild Glendower's bard, had a word of praise for London's 'Cheape,' for so the bards of Wales styled thee in their flowing odes. Then, if those who were not English, and hated England, and all connected therewith, had yet much to say in thy praise, when thou wast far inferior to what thou art now, why should true-born Englishmen, or those who call themselves so, turn up their noses at thee, and scoff thee at the present day, as I believe they do? But, let others do as they will, I, at least, who am not only an Englishman but an East Englishman, will not turn up my nose at thee, but will praise and extol thee, calling thee mart of the world—a place of wonder and astonishment!—and, were it right and fitting to wish that anything should endure for ever, I would say prosperity to Cheap-side, throughout all ages—may it be the world's resort for merchandise, world without end."

George Borrow.

LITTLE BRITAIN

IN the centre of the great city of London lies a small neighbourhood, consisting of a cluster of narrow streets and courts of very venerable and debilitated houses, which goes by the name of

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LITTLE BRITAIN. Christ Church School and St. Bartholomew's Hospital bound it on the west; Smithfield and Long Lane on the north; Aldersgate Street, like an arm of the sea, divides it from the eastern part of the city; whilst the yawning gulf of Bull-and-Mouth Street separate it from Butcher Lane and the regions of Newgate. Over this little territory, thus bounded and designated, the great dome of St. Paul's, swelling above the intervening houses of Paternoster Row, Amen Corner, and Ave Maria Lane, looks down with an air of motherly protection. . . .

Little Britain may truly be called the heart's core of the city; the stronghold of true John Bullism. It is a fragment of London, as it was in its better days, with its antiquated folks and fashions. Here flourish in great preservation many of the holiday games and customs of yore. The inhabitants most religiously eat pancakes on Shrove Tuesday, hot-cross buns on Good Friday, and roast goose at Michaelmas; they send love-letters on Valentine's Day, burn the Pope on the fifth of November, and kiss all the girls under the mistletoe at Christmas. Roast beef and plum pudding are also held in superstitious veneration, and port and sherry maintain their grounds as the only true English wines; all others being considered vile outlandish beverages.

Little Britain has its long catalogue of city wonders, which its inhabitants consider the wonders of the world; such as the great bell of St. Paul's,

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which sours all the beer when it tolls; the figures that strike the hours at St. Dunstan's clock; the Monument; the lions in the Tower; and the wooden giants in Guildhall. They still believe in dreams and fortune-telling, and an old woman that lives in Bull-and-Mouth Street makes a tolerable subsistence by detecting stolen goods, and promising the girls good husbands. They are apt to be rendered uncomfortable by comets and eclipses; and if a dog howls dolefully at night it is looked upon as a sure sign of death in the place. There are even many ghost stories current, particularly concerning the old mansion-houses; in several of which, it is said, strange sights are sometimes seen. Lords and ladies, the former in full-bottomed wigs, hanging sleeves and swords, the latter in lappets, stays, hoops, and brocade, have been seen walking up and down the great waste chambers, on moonlight nights; and are supposed to be the shades of the ancient proprietors in their court dresses.

Washington Irving.

THE SOUTH-SEA HOUSE

R EADER, in thy passage from the Bank—where thou hast been receiving thy half-yearly dividends (supposing thou art a lean annuitant like myself)—to the Flower Pot, to secure a place for Dalston or Shacklewell, or some other thy

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suburban retreat northerly—didst thou never observe a melancholy looking handsome brick and stone edifice, to the left, where Threadneedle Street abuts upon Bishopsgate? I dare say thou hast often admired its magnificent portals ever gaping wide, and disclosing to view a grave court, with cloisters, and pillars, with few or no traces of goers-in or comers-out—a desolation something like Balclutha's.

This was once a house of trade—a centre of busy interests. The throng of merchants was here—the quick pulse of pain—and here some forms of business are still kept up, though the soul be long since fled. Here are still to be seen stately porticos, imposing staircases, offices roomy as the state apartments in palaces—deserted, or thinly peopled with a few straggling clerks; and still more sacred interiors of court and committee rooms, with venerable faces of beadles, door-keepers, directors seated in form on solemn days (to proclaim a dead dividend), at long worm-eaten tables, that have been mahogany, with tarnished gilt-leather coverings, supporting massy silver inkstands long since dry; the oaken wainscots hung with pictures of deceased governors and sub-governors of Queen Anne, and the two first monarchs of the Brunswick dynasty; huge charts, which subsequent discoveries have antiquated; dusty maps of Mexico, dim as dreams,—and soundings of the Bay of Panama!—The long passages hung with buckets, appended, in idle row, to walls, whose substance might defy any,

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short of the last, conflagration: with vast ranges of cellarage under all, where dollars and pieces of eight once lay, an “unsunned heap,” for Mammon to have solaced his solitary heart withal—long since dissipated, or scattered into air at the blast of the breaking of that famous BUBBLE. Such is the SOUTH-SEA HOUSE.

Charles Lamb.

THE ROYAL EXCHANGE

THERE is no place in the town which I so much love to frequent as the Royal Exchange. It gives me a secret satisfaction, and in some measure gratifies my vanity, as I am an Englishman, to see so rich an assembly of countrymen and foreigners consulting together upon the private business of mankind, and making this metropolis a kind of emporium for the whole earth.

Joseph Addison.

WORKERS IN THE CITY

AT Blackfriars the crowd became more concentrated. Hugh was one of the thousands whom the streets and buildings engulfed daily, each atom coming from far or near, where there was space and individuality, to swell the organized and collected power which would move forward one

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day the great engine of commerce. The stream flowed more quickly here, between the high stone walls. Those few upon whom it rested to invent and control seemed to be putting away from the influences of their private lives, and to be wrapping themselves in the atmosphere of contest. Their faces were thoughtful, their steps quickened. It was these who set the pace, and carried with them the many who had nothing to do with the guiding the engine, whose labour expressed itself in hours, who must be diligent and careful, but need not be anxious, who could carry their home thoughts as far as their office stools and could take them up again when the appointed hours of their labour were done, without one look backwards or forwards at the end to which their day's work tended.

Archibald Marshall.

FOUNDER'S DAY AT CHARTERHOUSE

THE Grey Friars' School, . . . an ancient foundation of the time of James I, still subsists in the heart of London city. The death-day of the founder of the place is still kept solemnly by Cistercians. In their chapel, where assemble the boys of the school, and the fourscore old men of the Hospital, the founder's tomb stands, a huge edifice, emblazoned with heraldic decorations and clumsy carved allegories. There is an old Hall, a

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beautiful specimen of the architecture of James's time; an old Hall? many old halls; old staircases, old passages, old chambers decorated with old portraits, walking in the midst of which we walk as it were in the early seventeenth century. To others than Cistercians, Grey Friars is a dreary place possibly. Nevertheless, the pupils educated there love to revisit it; and the oldest of us grow young again for an hour or two as we come back into those scenes of childhood.

The custom of the school is, that on the 12th of December, the Founder's Day, the head gown boy shall recite a Latin oration, in praise *Fundatoris Nostri*, and upon other subjects; and a goodly company of old Cistercians is generally brought together to attend this oration: after which we go to chapel and hear a sermon; after which we adjourn to a great dinner, where old condisciples meet, old toasts are given, and speeches are made. Before marching from the oration-hall to chapel, the stewards of the day's dinner, according to old-fashioned rite, have wands put into their hands, walk to church at the head of the procession, and sit there in places of honour. The boys are already in their seats, with smug fresh faces, and shining white collars; the old black-gowned pensioners are on their benches; the chapel is lighted, and Founder's Tomb, with its grotesque carvings, monsters, heraldries, darkles and shines with the most wonderful shadows and lights. There he lies, *Funda-*

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tor Noster, in his ruff and gown, awaiting the great Examination Day. We oldsters, be we ever so old, become boys again as we look at that familiar old tomb, and think how the seats were altered since we were here, and how the doctor—not the present doctor, the doctor of *our* time—used to sit yonder, and his awful eye used to frighten us shuddering boys, on whom it lighted; and how the boy next us *would* kick our shins during service time, and how the monitor would cane us afterwards because our shins were kicked. Yonder sit forty cherry-cheeked boys, thinking about home and holidays to-morrow. Yonder sit some three-score old gentleman pensioners of the hospital, listening to the prayers and psalms. You hear them coughing feebly in the twilight, the old reverend black-gowns. . . . A plenty of candles lights up this chapel, and this scene of age and youth, and early memories, and pompous death. How solemn the well-remembered prayers are, here uttered again in the place where in childhood we used to hear them! How beautiful and decorous the rite; how noble the ancient words of the supplications which the priest utters, and to which generations of fresh children and troops of bygone seniors have cried Amen! under those arches!

William Makepeace Thackeray.

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THE LORD MAYOR'S SHOW

HOW well I remember the ninth of November,
The sky very foggy, the sun looking groggy,
In fact, altogether pea-soup colour'd weather.
Shop-windows all shutter'd, the pavement all buttered,
Policemen paraded, the street barricaded,
And a peal from the steeple of Bow!
Low women in pattens, high ladies in satins,
And Cousin Suburbans, in flame-colour'd turbans,
Quite up to the attics, inviting rheumatics,
A great mob collecting without much selecting,
And some, it's a pity, are free of the city,
As your pockets may happen to know! . . .

Such hustle and bustle, and mobbing and robbing,
All, all to see the Lord May'r's Show!

How well I remember the ninth of November,
Six trumpets on duty, as shrill as Veluti,
A great City Marshal, to riding not partial,
The footmen, the state ones, with calves very great ones,
The Cook and the Scullion, well basted with bullion,
And the squeal of each Corporate Co.
Four draymen from Perkins, in steel and brass jerkins,
A coach like a lantern, I wonder it *can* turn,
All carved like old buildings, and drawn by six *gildings*,
With two chubby faces, where sword and where mace is,
The late May'r, the Ex-one, a thought that must vex one,
And the new May'r just come into blow! . . .

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Such hustle and bustle, and mobbing and robbing,
All, all to see the Lord May'r's Show.

How well I remember the ninth of November,
The fine Lady May'ress, an Ostrich's heiress,
In best bib and tucker, and dignified pucker,
The learned Recorder, in Old Bailey order,
The Sheriffs together,—with their hanging weather,
And their heads like John Anderson's pow!
The Aldermen courtly, and looking "red port" ly,
And buckler and bargemen, with other great large men,
With streamers and banners, held up in odd manners,
A mob running "arter," to see it by "vater,"
And the Wharfs popping off as they go! . . .

Such hustle and bustle, such mobbing and robbing,
All, all to see the Lord May'r's Show!

Thomas Hood.

A LORD MAYOR'S BALL

AS we had passed so much of the evening with the mob, we thought we would finish the remainder of it with them, and went from the theatre to the Lord Mayor's Ball. There were, I suppose, about three or four thousand people there; but, excepting Mr. [Washington] Irving, with whom I went to see the show, and my bookseller, there was not a face I had ever seen before. The whole

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was a complete justification of all the satires and caricatures we have ever had upon city finery and vulgarity. At the head of one of the great halls, on a platform raised a couple of feet above the rest of the room, sat the Lord Mayor, dressed in full gala, and the Lord Mayoress, dressed in a hooped petticoat, a high head-dress, long waist, and a profusion of jewellery. They were surrounded by what, under other circumstances, might have seemed a court, but now looked more like the candle-snuffers and scene-shifters on the stage. . . . They were fenced off from the rabble, and sat there merely for exhibition. And, in truth, the spectators were worthy of the show they came to witness. They were but a mob of well-dressed people, collected in fine rooms, crowding for places to dance, . . . and gazing on the furniture in a manner that showed they had rarely or never seen such before, and almost fighting for the poor refreshments, as if they were half-starved; and yet with that genuine air of city complacency which felt assured there was nothing in the world, either so elegant as the apartments, or so great as the Lord Mayor, or so well-bred as themselves.

George Ticknor.

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A SUNDAY WEDDING IN FLEET STREET

ON any other day of the week, at this same time of half past ten in the morning, you could not move along the pavement here in Fleet Street at an average foot pace, it would be so densely peopled; moreover, a close procession of miscellaneous vehicles would be streaming down one side of the road, whilst a precisely similar procession streamed up the other: there would be a policeman stationed here, at the corner of Chancery Lane, to regulate the traffic.

There is so little traffic this Sunday morning, however, that the policeman is off duty. A solitary 'bus rattles past at intervals from the West, laden with suburban visitors, or from the East, with a lonely passenger or two on top and nobody inside, except, perhaps, the conductor himself, sitting disconsolate. All the shops are closed and folded in a blind apathy of sleep; there are so few pedestrians abroad you may count them easily; and we can hear each other's voice though we speak in whispers.

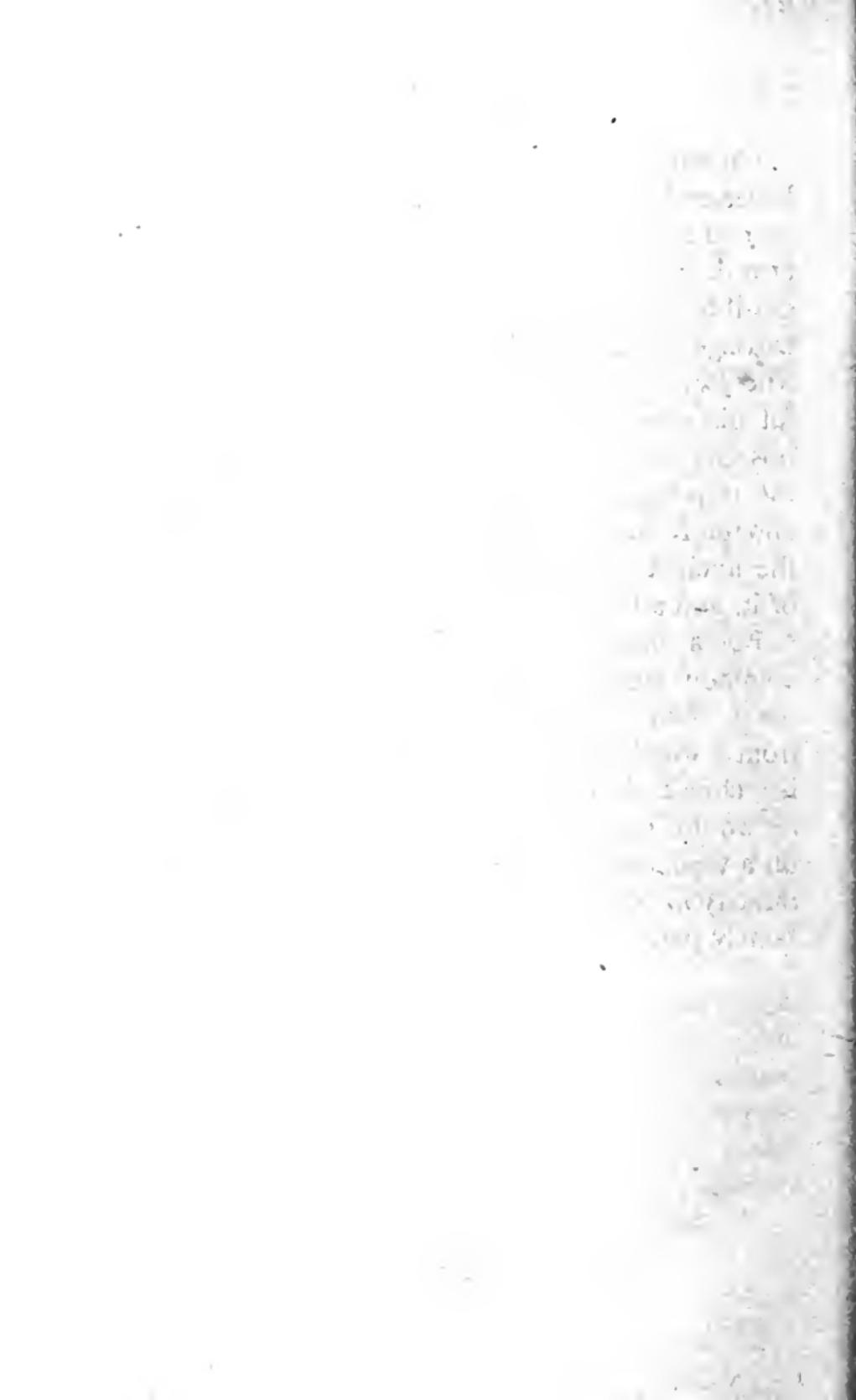
Such lonely quietness, here where such a tumult reigned but yesterday, affects one as something ghostly and unreal; it is much as if a simoon had swept suddenly through the noisy, thronged streets, and, burying their teeming life under invisible sands, had left in its wake the vast solitude and silence of the desert.

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Crossing into the shade, as we approach the lower end of the street, we are somewhat surprised to come upon a small and uncommonly orderly crowd. By the kerb, facing a narrow turning accessible only to foot-passengers, stand a private carriage and a four-wheel cab; an unattached four-wheeler and a hansom hover hopefully at a respectful distance. The driver of the carriage wears a nosegay; there are ribbons tied on his whip and on the trappings of his horse, and when we are near enough to look up that narrow turning we shall see the ancient church of St. Bride at the other end of it, and add ourselves to the crowd.

For a public wedding in the City is no such common sight in our days, when most citizens make their homes in the suburbs. You gather from a well-informed onlooker that the bridegroom is a shop-assistant in the neighbourhood; probably he would have no leisure to do the thing in style on a week-day, and is being married in church this Sunday in preference to getting a half-holiday and tamely patronizing a registry office.

A. St. John Adcock.



XI

THE RIVER AND THE RIVER-SIDE

BRUNSWICK

The River and the River-side

THE GENIUS OF THE THAMES

O'ER states and empires, near and far,
While rolls the fiery surge of war,
Thy country's wealth and power increase,
Thy vales and cities smile in peace:
And still, before thy gentle gales,
The laden bark of commerce sails;
And down thy flood, in youthful pride,
Those mighty vessels sternly glide,
Destined, amid the tempest's rattle,
To hurl the thunderbolt of battle,
To guard, in danger's hottest hour,
Britannia's old prescriptive power,
And through winds, floods, and fire, maintain
Her native empire of the main.

Thomas Love Peacock.

THE THAMES AT SUNSET

THE day was ending in a serenity of still and exquisite brilliance. The water shone pacifically; the sky, without a speck, was a benign immensity of unstained light; the very mist on the Essex marshes was like a gauzy and radiant fabric, hung from the wooded rises inland, and draping the low shores in diaphanous folds. Only the gloom to the west, brooding over the upper reaches, became

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more sombre every minute, as if angered by the approach of the sun.

And at last, in its curved and imperceptible fall, the sun sank low, and from glowing white changed to a dull red without rays and without heat, as if about to go out suddenly, stricken to death by the touch of that gloom brooding over a crowd of men.

Forthwith a change came over the waters, and the serenity became less brilliant but more profound. The old river in its broad reach rested unruffled at the decline of day, after ages of good service done to the race that peopled its banks, spread out in the tranquil dignity of a waterway leading to the uttermost ends of the earth. We looked at the venerable stream not in the vivid flush of a short day that comes and departs for ever, but in the august light of abiding memories. And indeed nothing is easier for a man who has, as the phrase goes, "followed the sea" with reverence and affection, than to evoke the great spirit of the past upon the lower reaches of the Thames. The tidal current runs to and fro in its unceasing service, crowded with memories of men and ships it had borne to the rest of home or to the battles of the sea. It had known and served all the men of whom the nation is proud, from Sir Francis Drake to Sir John Franklin, knights all, titled and untitled—the great knights-errant of the sea. It had borne all the ships whose names are like jewels flashing in the night of time, from the *Golden Hind* returning with her round

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flanks full of treasure, to be visited by the Queen's Highness and thus pass out of the gigantic tale, to the *Erebus* and *Terror*, bound on other conquests—and that never returned. It had known the ships and the men. They had sailed from Deptford, from Greenwich, from Erith—the adventurers and the settlers: kings' ships and the ships of men on 'Change; captains, admirals, the dark "interlopers" of the Eastern trade, and the commissioned "generals" of East India fleets. Hunters for gold or pursuers of fame, they had all gone out on that stream, bearing the sword, and often the torch, messengers of the might within the land, bearers of a spark from the sacred fire. What greatness had not floated on the ebb of that river into the mystery of an unknown earth! . . . The dreams of men, the seed of commonwealths, the germs of empires.

The sunset; the dusk fell on the stream, and lights began to appear along the shore. The Chapman lighthouse, a three-legged thing erect on a mud-flat, shone strongly. Lights of ships moved in the fairway—a great stir of lights going up and going down. And farther west on the upper reaches the place of the monstrous town was still marked ominously on the sky, a brooding gloom in sunshine, a lurid glare under the stars.

Joseph Conrad.

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SWEET THEMMES

A T length they all to mery London came,
To mery London, my most kyndly Nurse,
That to me gave this Lifes first native source,
Though from another place I take my name,
An house of auncient fame:
There when they came, whereas those bricky towres
The which on Themmes brode aged backe doe ryde,
Where now the studious Lawyers have their bowers,
There whylome wont the Templar Knights to byde,
Till they decayd through pride:
Next whereunto there stands a stately place,
Where oft I gayned giftes and goodly grace
Of that great Lord, which therein wont to dwell,
Whose want too well now feeles my frendless case;
But ah! here fits not well
Olde woes, but joyes, to tell
Against the bridale daye, which is not long:
Sweet Themmes! runne softly, till I end my Song.

Edmund Spenser.

A SCENE AT THE RIVER-SIDE

M ANY and many a pleasant stroll they had in
Covent Garden Market: snuffing up the per-
fume of the fruits and flowers, wondering at
the magnificence of the pine-apples and melons;
catching glimpses down sideavenues of rowsandrows

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of old women, seated on inverted baskets shelling peas; looking unutterable things at the fat bundles of asparagus with which the dainty shops were fortified as with a breastwork; and at the herbalists' doors, gratefully inhaling scents as of veal-stuffing yet uncooked, dreamily mixed up with capsicums, brown paper, seeds: even with hints of lusty snails and fine young curly leeches. Many and many a pleasant stroll they had among the poultry markets, where ducks and fowls, with necks unnaturally long, lay stretched out in pairs, ready for cooking; where there were speckled eggs in mossy baskets, white country sausages beyond impeachment by surviving cat or dog, or horse or donkey, new cheese to any wild extent, live birds in coops or cages, looking much too big to be natural, in consequence of those receptacles being much too little; rabbits, alive and dead, innumerable. Many a pleasant stroll they had among the cool, refreshing, silvery, fish-stalls, with a kind of moonlight effect about their stock-in-trade, excepting always for the ruddy lobsters. Many a pleasant stroll among the waggon-loads of fragrant hay, beneath which dogs and tired waggoners lay fast asleep, oblivious of the pieman and the public-house. But never half so good a stroll as down among the steam-boats on a bright morning.

There they lay alongside of each other; hard and fast for ever to all appearance, but designing to get out somehow, and quite confident of doing it; and in that faith shoals of passengers, and heaps of

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luggage were proceeding hurriedly on board. Little steam-boats dashed up and down the stream incessantly. Tiers upon tiers of vessels, scores of masts, labyrinths of tackle, idle sails, splashing oars, gliding row-boats, lumbering barges, sunken piles, with ugly lodgings for the water-rat within their mud-discoloured nooks; church steeples, warehouses, house-roofs, arches, bridges, men and women, children, casks, cranes, boxes, horses, coaches, idlers, and hard-labourers; there they were, all jumbled up together, any summer morning. . . .

In the midst of all this turmoil, there was an incessant roar from every packet's funnel which quite expressed and carried out the uttermost emotion of the scene. They all appeared to be perspiring and bothering themselves, exactly as their passengers did; they never left off fretting and chafing, in their own hoarse manner, once; but were always panting out, without any stops, "Come along do make haste I'm very nervous come along oh good gracious we shall never get there how late you are do make haste I'm off directly come along!" Even when they had left off, and got safely out into the current, on the smallest provocation they began again: for the bravest packet of them all, being stopped by some entanglement in the river, would immediately begin to fume and pant afresh, "Oh here's a stoppage what's the matter do go on there I'm in a hurry it's done on purpose did you ever oh my goodness *do* go on here!" and so, in a state of mind bordering

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on distraction, would be last seen drifting slowly through the mist into the summer light beyond, that made it red.

Charles Dickens.

SONNET COMPOSED ON WESTMINSTER BRIDGE, SEPTEMBER 3rd, 1802

EARTH has not anything to show more fair:
Dull would he be of soul who could pass by
A sight so touching in its majesty:
This City now doth, like a garment, wear
The beauty of the morning; silent, bare,
Ships, towers, domes, theatres, and temples lie
Open unto the fields and to the sky;
All bright and glittering in the smokeless air.

Never did sun more beautifully steep
In its first splendour, valley, rock, and hill;
Ne'er saw I, never felt, a calm so deep!
The river glideth at its own sweet will:
Dear God! the very houses seem asleep;
And all that mighty heart is lying still!

William Wordsworth.

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THE EMBANKMENT AT NIGHT

At his feet lay the quiet strip of garden, lawn and bush; beyond, the lamps burning on the parapet of the Embankment, and beyond them the river shining in the starlight, polished and lucent like a slab of black marble, with broad regular rays upon it of a still deeper blackness, where the massive columns of Hungerford bridge cast shadows on the water. An engine puffed and snorted into the station, leaving its pennant of white smoke in the air. Through the glass walls of the signal-box above the bridge Drake could see the man in a blaze of light working at the levers, and from the Surrey end there came to him a clink, and at that distance a quite musical clink, of truck against truck as some freight train was shunted across the rails. Away to his right the light was burning on Westminster clock-tower; on Westminster Bridge the lamps of cabs and carriages darted to and fro like fire-flies. Drake watched two of them start across in the same direction a few yards apart, saw the one behind close up, the one in front spurt forward as though each was straining for the lead. They drew level, then flashed apart, then again drew level and so passing and repassing raced into the myriad lights upon the opposite bank. That bank was visible to him through a tracery of leafless twigs, for a tree grew in front of his window on the farther edge of the gardens, and

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he could see the lights upon its roadway dancing, twirling, clashing in the clear night, just as they clashed and twirled and danced in the roadway beneath him, sparks from a forge, and that forge, London. In their ceaseless motion, they seemed rivulets of fire, and the black sheet of water between them the solid highway. But even while he looked, a ruby light moved on the highway out from the pillars of the bridge, and then another and another. Everywhere was the glitter of light; fixed, flashing like a star on the curve, or again growing slowly from a pin's point to an orb, and then dwindling to a point and vanishing. And on every side, too, Drake heard the quick beat of horses, and the rattle of wheels struck out not from silence, but from a dull eternal hum like the hum of a mill, sharp particular notes emerging incessantly from a monotonous volume of sound.

A. E. W. Mason.

HUNGERFORD AND WATERLOO BRIDGES

THEN, the crowds for ever passing and repassing on the bridges (on those which are free of toll at least), where many stop on fine evenings looking listlessly down upon the water, with some vague idea that by-and-by it runs between great banks which grow wider and wider until at last it joins the broad vast sea, where some halt to rest

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from heavy loads, and think, as they look over the parapet, that to smoke and lounge away one's life, and lie sleeping in the sun upon a hot tarpaulin, in a dull, slow, sluggish barge, must be happiness unalloyed—and where some, and a very different class, pause with heavier loads than they, remembering to have heard or read in some old time that drowning was not a hard death, but of all means of suicide the easiest and best.

Charles Dickens.

LAMBETH BRIDGE AT NIGHT

UNSWALLOWSHIPS of all bridges crossing Thames, the red hue of its iron superstructure, which in daylight only enhances the meanness of its appearance, at night invests it with a certain grim severity; the archway, with its bolted metal plates, its wire-woven cables, over-glimmered with the yellowness of the gas-lamps which it supports, might be the entrance to some fastness of ignoble misery. The road is narrow, and after nightfall has but little traffic.

Gilbert walked as far as the middle of the bridge, then leaned upon the parapet and looked northwards. The tide was running out; it swept darkly onwards to the span of Westminster Bridge, whose crescent of lights it repeated in long unsteady rays. Along the base of the Houses of Parliament the few sparse lamps contrasted with the line of bright-

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ness on the Embankment opposite. The Houses themselves rose grandly in obscure magnitude; the clock-tower beaconed with two red circles against the black sky, the greater tower stood night-clad, and between them were the dim pinnacles, multiplied in shadowy grace. Farther away Gilbert could just discern a low, grey shape, that resting-place of poets and of kings which to look upon filled his heart with worship.

In front of the Embankment, a few yards out into the stream, was moored a string of barges; between them and the shore the reflected lamplight made one unbroken breadth of radiance, blackening the mid-current. From that the eye rose to St. Thomas's Hospital, spreading block after block, its windows telling of the manifold woe within. Nearer was the Archbishop's Palace, dark, lifeless; the roofs were defined against a sky made lurid by the streets of Lambeth. On the pier below signalled two crimson lights.

The church bells kept up their clangorous discord, softened at times by the wind. A steamboat came fretting up the stream; when it had passed under the bridge, its spreading track caught the reflected gleams and flung them away to die on unsearchable depths. Then issued from beneath a barge with set sail, making way with wind and tide; in silence it moved onwards, its sail dark and ghastly, till the further bridge swallowed it. . . .

The wind blew piercingly. . . . Along the Em-

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bankment it was all but deserted; the tread of a policeman echoed from the distance. But in spite of the bitter sky, two people were sitting together on one of the benches—a young man and a work-girl; they were speaking scarcely above a whisper.

George Gissing.

BLACKFRIARS BRIDGE

HE heard the breath of London, a slow, rumbling moan like the thunder of a thousand seas on a thousand shores, a strange rhythm in its multitudinous music, as if his ear were pressed against the bosom of a god in a titanic auscultation. The blood in those stony arteries pulsated dreadfully, and the hammering beat of London's heart seemed to him to be the very throb of life and death. The great lungs rose and fell between earth and sky with a laboured breathing like the sobbing thrust of all the pistons in the world. Jets of sound spurted from the level turmoil. The shriek of a locomotive, the howl of a steam-engine, the hollow groan of a train creeping on a bridge, the chiming and booming of bells, the clang of hooves on asphalt, the turning of innumerable wheels, and myriads of nameless noises scored the waste of sound. His ears ached with the effort to follow the notes of this stupendous symphony played by an overture of six million players to some audience in the sky. It was a relief for him to take refuge from

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the agony of hearing in the details of sight, and to see how London buckles the Thames like a khaki vest on her grey uniform. He watched the bridges crawling with horses like flies and with men like midges. The muddy river sparkled with points of light like a rain of diamonds. The old wharves stepped into the stream deliberately, wading knee-deep in the moving water. At intervals he saw neat bundles of barges, and here and there a brown sail stained the flood. A tiny steamboat with its petticoat of foam darted daintily through the traffic like a lady crossing Piccadilly Circus. Looking eastward, his glance was seized breathlessly in the broad embrace of the Tower Bridge, its huge arms passionately outstretched towards the Channel in a vast gesture of welcome or farewell to all the ships that sail the seven seas. Through the giant portal a stately ship was marching seaward, and over the smudged east a dim glamour of gleaming water and tangled masts whispered to him a rumour of storms and foreign lands.

James Douglas.

LONDON BRIDGE

A STRANGE kind of bridge it was, huge and massive, and seemingly of great antiquity. It had an arched back, like that of a hog, a high balustrade, and at either side, at intervals, were stone bowers bulking over the river, but open on

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the other side, and furnished with a semicircular bench. Though the bridge was wide—very wide—it was all too narrow for the concourse upon it. Thousands of human beings were pouring over the bridge. But what chiefly struck my attention was a double row of carts and waggons, the generality drawn by horses as large as elephants, each row striving hard in a different direction, and not unfrequently brought to a standstill. Oh, the cracking of whips, the shouts and oaths of the carters, and the grating of wheels upon the enormous stones that formed the pavement! In fact, there was a wild hurly-burly upon the bridge, which nearly deafened me. But, if upon the bridge there was a confusion, below it there was a confusion ten times confounded. The tide, which was fast ebbing, obstructed by the immense piers of the old bridge, poured beneath the arches with a fall of several feet, forming in the river below as many whirlpools as there were arches. Truly tremendous was the roar of the descending waters, and the bellow of the tremendous gulfs, which swallowed them for a time, and then cast them forth, foaming and frothing from their horrid wombs. Slowly advancing along the bridge, I came to the highest point, and there stood still, close beside one of the stone bowers, in which, beside a fruit stall, sat an old woman, with a pan of charcoal at her feet, and a book in her hand, in which she appeared to be reading intently. There I stood, just above the principal arch, look-

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ing through the balustrade at the scene that presented itself—and such a scene! Towards the left bank of the river, a forest of masts, thick and close, as far as the eye could reach; spacious wharfs, surmounted with gigantic edifices; and, far away, Caesar's Castle, with its White Tower. To the right, another forest of masts, and a maze of buildings, from which, here and there, shot up to the sky chimneys taller than Cleopatra's Needle, vomiting forth huge wreaths of that black smoke which forms the canopy—occasionally a gorgeous one—of the more than Babel city. Stretching before me, the troubled breast of the mighty river, and, immediately below, the main whirlpool of the Thames—the Maëlstrom of the bulwarks of the middle arch—a grisly pool, which, with its superabundance of horror, fascinated me.

George Borrow.

ROTHERHITHE

NEAR to that part of the Thames on which the church at Rotherhithe abuts, where the buildings on the banks are dirtiest, and the vessels on the river blackest with the dust of colliers and the smoke of close-built, low-roofed houses, there exists the filthiest, the strangest, the most extraordinary of the many localities that are hidden in London, wholly unknown, even by name, to the great mass of its inhabitants.

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To reach this place, the visitor has to penetrate through a maze of close, narrow, and muddy streets, thronged by the roughest and poorest of waterside people, and devoted to the traffic they may be supposed to occasion. The cheapest and least delicate provisions are heaped in the shops; the coarsest and commonest articles of wearing apparel dangle at the salesman's door, and stream from the house parapet and windows. Jostling with unemployed labourers of the lowest class, ballast-heavers, coal-whippers, brazen women, ragged children, and the raff and refuse of the river, he makes his way with difficulty along, assailed by offensive sights and smells from the narrow alleys which branch off on the right and left, and deafened by the clash of ponderous waggons that bear great piles of merchandise from the stacks of warehouses that rise from every corner. Arriving, at length, in streets remoter and less frequented than those through which he has passed, he walks beneath tottering house-fronts projecting over the pavement, dismantled walls that seem to totter as he passes, chimneys half crushed half hesitating to fall, windows guarded by rusty iron bars that time and dirt have almost eaten away, every imaginable sign of desolation and neglect.

In such a neighbourhood, beyond Dockhead in the Borough of Southwark, stands Jacob's Island, surrounded by a muddy ditch, six or eight feet deep and fifteen or twenty wide when the tide is in,

The River and the River-side

once called Mill Pond, but known in the days of this story as Folly Ditch. It is a creek or inlet from the Thames, and can always be filled at high water by opening the sluices at the Lead Mills from which it took its old name. At such times a stranger, looking from one of the wooden bridges thrown across it at Mill Lane, will see the inhabitants of the houses on either side lowering from their back doors and windows, buckets, pails, domestic utensils of all kinds, in which to haul the water up; and when his eye is turned from these operations to the houses themselves, his utmost astonishment will be excited by the scene before him. Crazy wooden galleries common to the backs of half-a-dozen houses, with holes from which to look upon the slime beneath; windows, broken and patched, with poles thrust out, on which to dry the linen that is never there; rooms so small, so filthy, so confined, that the air would seem too tainted even for the dirt and squalor which they shelter; wooden chambers thrusting themselves out above the mud, and threatening to fall into it—as some have done; dirt-besmeared walls and decaying foundations; every repulsive lineament of poverty, every loathsome indication of filth, rot, and garbage; all these ornament the banks of Folly Ditch.

In Jacob's Island the warehouses are roofless and empty; the walls are crumbling down; the windows are windows no more; the doors are falling into the streets; the chimneys are blackened, but they yield

London's Lure

no smoke. Thirty or forty years ago, before losses and chancery suits came upon it, it was a thriving place; but now it is a desolate island indeed. The houses have no owners; they are broken open, and entered upon by those who have the courage; and there they live, and there they die. They must have powerful motives for a secret residence, or be reduced to a destitute condition indeed, who seek a refuge in Jacob's Island.

Charles Dickens.

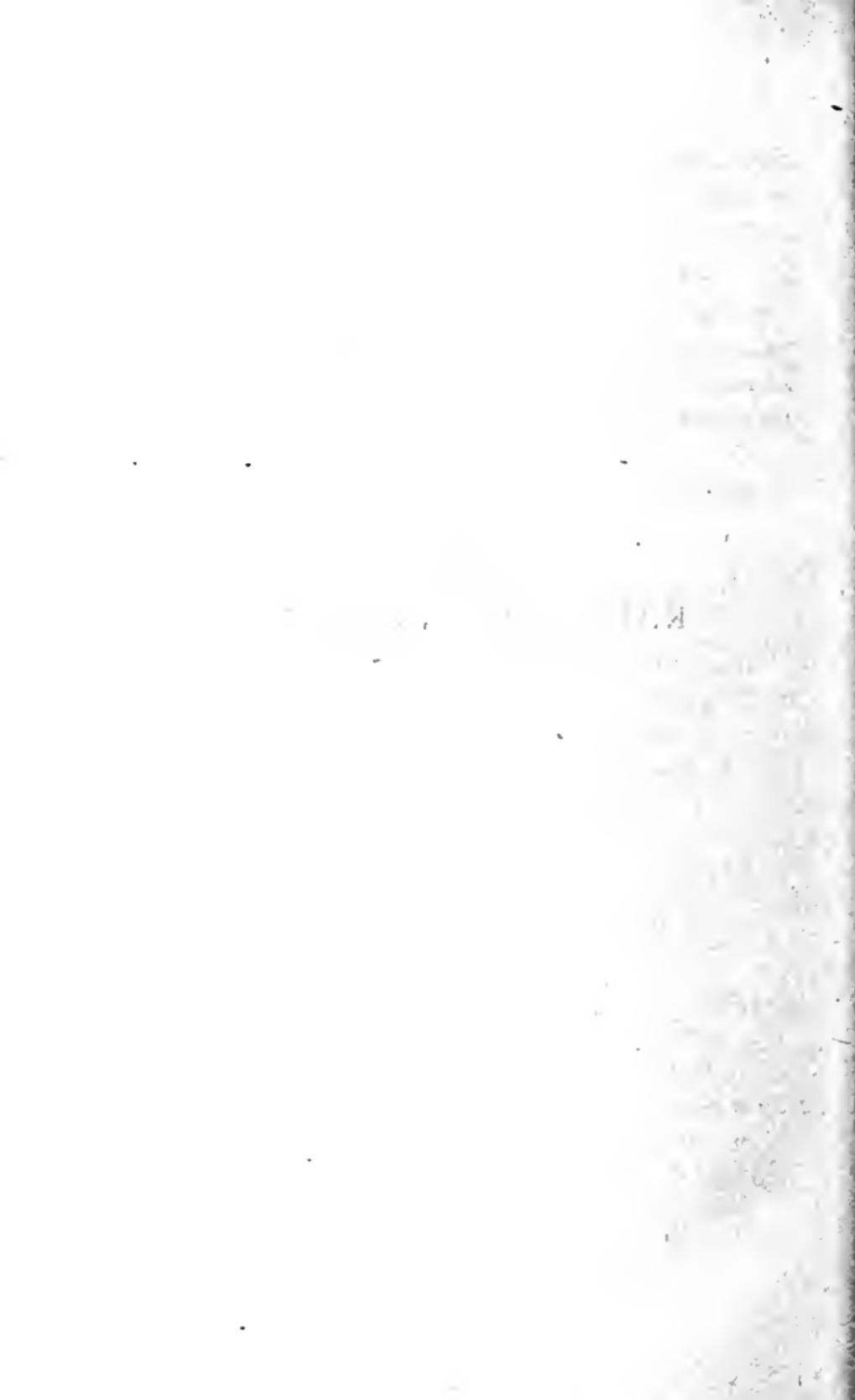
THE THAMES FAIR

O ROVING Muse, recal that wond'rous year,
When Winter reigned in bleak *Britannia's* air;
When hoary *Thames*, with frosted oziers crown'd,
Was three long moons in icy fetters bound.
The Waterman, forlorn along the shore,
Pensive reclines upon his useless oar,
See harness'd steeds desert the stony town;
And wander road unstable not their own:
Wheels o'er the harden'd waters smoothly glide,
And rase with whiten'd tracks the slipp'ry tide.
Here the fat cook piles high the blazing fire,
And scarce the spit can turn the steer entire.
Booths sudden hide the *Thames*, long streets appear,
And num'rous games proclaim the crowded fair.

John Gay.

XII

RAIN, SMOKE, AND FOG



Rain, Smoke, and Fog

A DESCRIPTION OF A CITY SHOWER

CAREFUL observers may fortel the hour
(By sure prognostics) when to dread a shower.
While rain depends, the pensive cat gives o'er
Her frolics, and pursues her tail no more.
Returning home at night, you'll find the sink
Strike your offending sense with double stink.
If you be wise, then go not far to dine;
You'll spend in coach-hire more than save in wine.
A coming shower your shooting corns presage,
Old aches will throb, your hollow tooth will rage.
Sauntering in coffee-house is Dulman seen;
He damns the climate, and complains of *spleen*.

Meanwhile, the South, rising with dabbled wings,
A sable cloud athwart the welkin flings,
That swill'd more liquor than it could contain,
And, like a drunkard, gives it up again.
Brisk Susan whips her linen from the rope,
While the first drizzling shower is borne aslope:
Such is that sprinkling which some careless quean
Flirts on you from her mop, but not so clean:
You fly, invoke the gods; then, turning, stop
To rail; she, singing, still whirls on her mop.
Not yet the dust had shunn'd the unequal strife,
But, aided by the wind, fought still for life;
And, wafted with its foe by violent gust,
'Twas doubtful which was rain and which was dust.
Ah! where must needy poet seek for aid,
When dust and rain at once his coat invade?

London's Lure

Sole coat! where dust cemented by the rain
Erects the nap, and leaves a cloudy stain!

Now in contiguous drops the flood comes down,
Threatening with deluge this devoted town.
To shops in crowds the draggled females fly,
Pretend to cheapen goods, but nothing buy.
The templar spruce, while every spout's abroach,
Stays till 'tis fair, yet seems to call a coach.
The tuck'd-up semstress walks with hasty strides,
While streams run down her oil'd umbrella's sides.
Here various kinds, by various fortunes led,
Commence acquaintance underneath a shed.
Triumphant Tories and desponding Whigs
Forget their feuds, and join to save their wigs.
Box'd in a chair, the beau impatient sits,
While spouts run clattering o'er the roof by fits,
And ever and anon, with frightful din,
The leather sounds; he trembles from within.
So when Troy chairmen bore the wooden steed,
Pregnant with Greeks impatient to be freed,
(Those bully Greeks who, as the moderns do,
Instead of paying chairmen, ran them through)
Laocoön struck the outside with his spear,
And each imprisoned hero quak'd for fear.

Now from all parts the swelling kennels flow,
And bear their trophies with them as they go:
Filths of all hues and odours seem to tell
What street they sail'd from by their sight and smell.
They, as each torrent drives, with rapid force,
From Smithfield or St. 'Pulchre's shape their course,

Rain, Smoke, and Fog

And in huge confluence join'd at Snowhill ridge,
And from the conduit prone to Holbourn bridge.
Sweeping from butchers' stalls, dung, guts, and blood,
Drown'd puppies, stinking sprats, all drench'd in mud,
Dead cats and turnip-tops come tumbling down the
flood.

Jonathan Swift.

A WET NIGHT IN LONDON

AT London Bridge the door is opened by some one who gets out, and the cold air comes in; there is a rush of people in damp coats, with dripping umbrellas, and time enough to notice the archæologically interesting wooden beams which support the roof of the South Eastern station. Antique beams they are, good old Norman oak, such as you may sometimes find in very old country churches that have not been restored, such as yet exist in Westminster Hall, temp. Rufus or Stephen, or so. Genuine old woodwork, worth your while to go and see. Take a sketch-book and make much of the ties and angles and bolts; ask Whistler or Macbeth, or some one to etch them, get the Royal Antiquarian Society to pay a visit and issue a pamphlet; gaze at them reverently and earnestly, for they are not easily to be matched in London. Iron girders and spacious roofs are the modern fashion; here we have the Middle Ages well preserved—slam !

London's Lure

the door is banged-to, onwards, over the invisible river, more red signals and rain, and finally the terminus. Five hundred well-dressed and civilised savages, wet, cross, weary, all anxious to get in—eager for home and dinner; five hundred stiffened and cramped folk equally eager to get out—mix on a narrow platform, with a train running off one side, and a detached engine gliding gently after it. Push, wriggle, wind in and out, bumps from portmanteaus, and so at last out into the street.

Richard Jefferies.

LONDON SMOKE

WE reached Hyde Park corner; I liked the appearance of it; but we were soon lost in a maze of busy, smoky, dirty streets, more and more so as we advanced. A sort of uniform dinginess seemed to pervade everything, that is, the exterior; for through every door and window, the interior of the house, the shops at least, which are most seen, presented, as we drove along, appearances and colours most opposite to this dinginess; everything there was clean, fresh, and brilliant. The elevated pavement on each side of the streets full of walkers, out of the reach of carriages, passing swiftly in two lines, without awkward interference, each taking to the right. At last a very indifferent street brought us in front of a magnificent temple,

Rain, Smoke, and Fog

which I knew immediately to be St. Paul's, and I left the vehicle to examine it. The effect was wonderfully beautiful; but it had less vastness than grace and magnificence. The colours struck me as strange,—very black and very white, in patches which envelop sometimes half a column; the base of one, the capital of another;—here, a whole row quite black,—there, as white as chalk. It seemed as if there had been a fall of snow, and it adhered unequally. The cause of this is evidently the smoke which covers London; but it is difficult to account for its unequal operation. This singularity has not the bad effect which might be expected from it.

Louis Simond.

A NOVEMBER FOG

HAVE you not seen (you must remember)
A fog in London—time, November?
That non-descript elsewhere, and grown
In our congenial soil alone?
First, at the dawn of lingering day
It rises, of an ashy gray,
Then, deepening with a sordid stain
Of yellow, like a lion's mane,
Vapour importunate and dense,
It wars at once with every sense,
Invades the eyes, is tasted, smelt,
And, like Egyptian darkness, felt.

London's Lure

The ears escape not. All around
Returns a dull unwonted sound,
Loth to stand still, afraid to stir,
The chilled and puzzled passenger,
Oft blundering from the pavement, fails
To feel his way along the rails.
Or, at the crossings, in the roll
Of every carriage dreads its pole.

Scarce an eclipse with pall so dun
Blots from the face of heaven the sun,
If sun indeed he can be called,
With orb so beamless and so bald;
When not an arrow from his quiver
Alights unblunted on the river.
But soon a thicker, darker cloak
Wraps all the town. Behold! The smoke
Which steam-compelling trade disgorges
From all her furnaces and forges,
In pitchy clouds, too dense to rise,
Descends, rejected, from the skies,
Till straggling day, extinguished quite,
At noon gives place to candle-light!

O Chemistry, *attractive maid*,
Descend in pity to our aid!
Come, with thy all-pervading gases,
Thy crucibles, retorts, and glasses,
Thy fearful energies and wonders,
Thy dazzling lights and mimic thunders!

Rain, Smoke, and Fog

Let Carbon in thy train be seen,
Dark Azote, and fair Oxygene.
And Woolaston, and Davy guide
The car that bears thee, at thy side.
If any power can any how
Abate these nuisances, 'tis thou.
And see, to aid thee in the blow,
The bill of Michael Angelo!
O join (success a thing of course is)
Thy heav'nly to his mortal forces,
Make all our chimneys chew the cud
Like hungry cows, as chimneys should,
And since 'tis only smoke we draw
Within our lungs, at common law,
Into their thirsty tubes be sent
Fresh air—by act of Parliament!

Henry Luttrell.

A LONDON FOG

LONDON. Michaelmas Term lately over, and the Lord Chancellor sitting in Lincoln's Inn Hall. Implacable November weather. As much mud in the streets, as if the waters had but newly retired from the face of the earth, and it would not be wonderful to meet a *Megalosaurus*, forty feet long or so, waddling like an elephantine lizard up Holborn Hill. Smoke lowering down from chimney-pots, making a soft, black drizzle, with flakes of soot

London's Lure

in it as big as full-grown snow-flakes—gone into mourning, one might imagine, for the death of the sun. Dogs, undistinguishable in mire. Horses, scarcely better; splashed to their very blinkers. Foot passengers, jostling one another's umbrellas, in a general infection of ill-temper, and losing their foot-hold at street corners, where tens of thousands of other foot-passengers have been slipping and sliding since the day broke (if this day ever broke), adding new deposits to the crust upon crust of mud, sticking at these points tenaciously to the pavement, and accumulating at compound interest.

Fog everywhere. Fog up the river, where it flows among green aits and meadows; fog down the river, where it rolls defiled among the tiers of shipping, and the waterside pollutions of a great (and dirty) city. Fog on the Essex marshes, fog on the Kentish heights. Fog creeping into the cabooses of collier-brigs; fog lying out on the yards, and hovering in the rigging of great ships; fog drooping on the gunwales of barges and small boats. Fog in the eyes and throats of ancient Greenwich pensioners, wheezing by the firesides of their wards; fog in the stem and bowl of the afternoon pipe of the wrathful skipper, down in his close cabin; fog cruelly pinching the toes and fingers of his shivering little 'prentice boy on deck. Chance people on the bridges peeping over the parapets into a nether sky of fog, with fog all round them, as if they were up in a balloon, and hanging in the misty clouds.

Rain, Smoke, and Fog

Gas looming through the fog in divers places in the streets, much as the sun may, from the spongy fields, be seen to loom by husbandman and plough-boy. Most of the shops lighted two hours before their time—as the gas seems to know, for it has a haggard and unwilling look.

The raw afternoon is rawest, and the dense fog is densest, and the muddy streets are muddiest, near that leaden-headed old obstruction, appropriate ornament for the threshold of a leaden-headed old corporation: Temple Bar.

Charles Dickens.

A LONDON FOG

In blue-gray fog, as in the sea, we drown;
The unseen rain soaks down;
Like broken phantom pillars, from each roof
The chimneys soar aloof.

The sky, lost, like some ocean from below,
Melts in one general flow;
Vague, dull, immense, splashed with the light of tears,
The long dim pavement sheers.

And now, and now, across its sullied glass,
The blotted figures pass;—
Hope, poverty, ambition, lust, and pain
Glide muffled through the rain.

London's Lure

And she, whom most we love, or that fell head
Our thoughts hate most, and dread,
Might cleave the blueness of our cheek, nor make
One sentry-nerve awake.

This is an image of indifferent death,
That chokes the ardent breath,
Bids the warm eye be veiled, the heart beat slow,
The tide of self slip low,

And with its universal chill prepares
This creature of bright airs
For faint eternal grades of misty blue,
And mazes without clue.

Edmund Gosse.

XIII

SOME LITERARY MEN IN LONDON

ANITA MUG

Some Literary Men in London

A FAREWELL TO LONDON

I SEND, I send here my supremest kiss
To thee, my *silver-footed Thamasis*.
No more shall I reiterate thy Strand,
Whereon so many Stately Structures stand:
Nor in the summers sweeter evenings go,
To bath in thee (as thousand others doe,)
No more shall I along thy crystall glide,
In Barge (with boughes and rushes beautifi'd)
With soft-smooth Virgins (for our chaste disport)
To *Richmond, Kingstone*, and to *Hampton-Court*:
Never againe shall I with Finnie-Ore
Put from, or draw unto the faithfull shore:
And Landing here, or safely Landing there,
Make way to my *Belovèd Westminster*:
Or to the *Golden-cheap-side*, where the earth
Of *Julia Herrick* gave to me my Birth.
May all clean *Nimphs* and curious water Dames,
With Swan-like-state, flote up and down thy streams:
No drought upon thy wanton waters fall
To make them Leane, and languishing at all.
No ruffling winds come hither to discease
Thy pure, and *Silver-wristed Naiades*,
Keep up your state, ye streams; and as ye spring,
Never make sick your Banks by surfeiting.
Grow young with Tydes, and though I see ye never,
Receive this vow, *so fare-ye-well for ever*.

Robert Herrick.

London's Lure

HIS RETURNE TO LONDON

FROM the dull confines of the drooping West,
To see the day spring from the pregnant East,
Ravisht in spirit, I come, nay more, I flie
To thee, blest place of my Nativitie!
Thus, thus with hallowed foot I touch the ground,
With thousand blessings by thy Fortune crown'd.
O fruitful Genius! that bestowest here
An everlasting plenty, yeere by yeere.
O *Place!* O *People!* Manners! fram'd to please
All Nations, Customes, Kindreds, Languages!
I am a free-born *Roman*; suffer then,
That I amongst you live a *Citizen*.
London my home is; though by hard fate sent
Into a long and irksome banishment;
Yet since cal'd back; henceforth let me be,
O native countrey, reposest by thee!
For, rather then I'le to the West return,
I'll beg of thee first here to have mine Urn.
Weak I am grown, and must on short time fall;
Give thou my sacred Reliques Buriall.

Robert Herrick.

Some Literary Men in London

HERRICK IN LONDON

WELL the poet liked fair London city;
He polished some of its choicest gems,
And wrote full many a lyric ditty,
In taverns over the sparkling Thames:
For those were the days when the Thames ran clear
Palace and shadowy lawn between,
And bays glittered with stately cheer,
And light feet danced upon Charing green.

Mortimer Collins

CHATTERTON IN HOLBORN

FROM country fields I came, that hid
The harvest mice at play,
And followed care, whose summons bid
To London's troubled way.

And there, in wandering far and wide,
I chanced ere day was done
Where Holborn poured its civic tide
Beneath the autumn sun.

So hot the sun, so great the throng,
I gladly stayed my feet
To hear a linnet's captive song
Accuse the noisy street.

London's Lure

There heavily an old house bowed
Its gabled head, and made
Obeisance to the modern crowd
That swept athwart its shade.

Below, an open window kept
Old books in rare display,
Where critics drowsed and poets slept
Till Grub Street's judgment-day.

One book brought care again to me,—
The book of Rowley's rhyme,
That Chatterton, in seigneurly
Of song, bore out of time.

The merchant of such ware, unseen,
Watched spider-like the street;
He came forth, gray, and spider-thin,
And talked with grave conceit.

Old books, old times,—he drew them nigh
At Chatterton's pale spell:
“ ‘Twas Brook Street,” said he, “ saw him die,
Old Holborn knew him well.”

The words brought back in sudden sway
That new-old tale of doom;
It seemed the boy but yesterday
Died in his lonely room.

Some Literary Men in London

Without, the press of men was heard;
I heard, as one who dreamed,
The hurrying throng, the singing bird,
And yesterday it seemed.

And as I turned to go, the tale
A pensive requiem made,
As though within the churchyard rail
The boy was newly laid.

REQUIEM

“Perhaps, who knows? the hurrying throng
Gave hopeless thoughts to him;
I fancy how he wandered, long,
Until the night grew dim.

“The windows saw him come and pass
And come and go again,
And still the throng swept by—alas!
The barren face of men.

“And when the day was gone, the way
Led down the lethal deeps:
Sweet Life! what requiem to say?—
'Tis well, 'tis well, he sleeps!”

Ernest Rhys.

London's Lure

ELIA IN LONDON

WITH what a gusto Mr. Lamb describes the inns and courts of law, the Temple and Gray's Inn, as if he had been a student there for the last two hundred years, and had been as well acquainted with the person of Sir Francis Bacon as he is with his portrait or writings! It is hard to say whether St. John's Gate is connected with more intense and authentic associations in his mind, as a part of Old London Wall, or as the frontispiece (time out of mind) of the "Gentleman's Magazine." He haunts Watling Street like a gentle spirit; the avenues to the playhouses are thick with panting recollections, and Christ's Hospital still breathes the balmy breath of infancy in his description of it! Whittington and his Cat are a fine hallucination for Mr. Lamb's historic Muse, and we believe he never heartily forgave a certain writer who took the subject of Guy Faux out of his hands. The streets of London are his fairyland, teeming with wonder, with life and interest to his retrospective glance, as it did to the eager eye of childhood; he has contrived to weave its tritest traditions into a bright and endless romance!

William Hazlitt.

Some Literary Men in London

DICKENS RETURNS ON CHRISTMAS DAY

(A ragged girl in Drury Lane was heard to exclaim,
“Dickens dead? Then will Father Christmas die too?”)

“DICKENS is dead!” Beneath that grievous cry
London seemed shivering in the summerheat;
Strangers took up the tale like friends that
meet:

“Dickens is dead!” said they, and hurried by;
Street children stopped their games—they knew
not why,
But some new night seemed darkening down the
street.

A girl in rags, staying her way-worn feet,
Cried, “Dickens dead? Will Father Christmas die?”

City he loved, take courage on thy way!
He loves thee still, in all thy joys and fears.
Though he whose smile made bright thine eyes of
grey—
Though he whose voice, uttering thy burthened
years,
Made laughers bubble through thy sea of tears—
Is gone, Dickens returns on Christmas Day!

Theodore Watts-Dunton.

London's Lure

A TALK ON WATERLOO BRIDGE

THE LAST SIGHT OF GEORGE BORROW

WE talked of "Children of the Open Air,"
Who once on hill and valley lived aloof,
Loving the sun, the wind, the sweet reproof
Of storms, and all that makes the fair earth fair,
Till, on a day, across the mystic bar
Of moonrise, came the "Children of the Roof,"
Who find no balm 'neath evening's rosiest woof,
Nor dews of peace beneath the Morning Star.
We looked o'er London, where men wither and choke,
Roofed in, poor souls, renouncing stars and skies,
And lore of woods and wild wind prophecies,
Yea, every voice that to their fathers spoke:
And sweet it seemed to die ere bricks and smoke
Leave never a meadow outside Paradise.

Theodore Watts-Dunton.

JOHNSON ON LONDON

TALKING of London, he observed, "Sir, if you wish to have a just notion of the magnitude of this city, you must not be satisfied with seeing its great streets and squares, but must survey the innumerable little lanes and courts. It is not in

Some Literary Men in London

the showy evolutions of buildings, but in the multiplicity of human habitations which are crowded together, that the wonderful immensity of London consists"—I have often amused myself with thinking how different a place London is to different people. They, whose narrow minds are contracted to the consideration of some one particular pursuit, view it only through that medium. A politician thinks of it merely as the seat of government in its different departments; a grazier, as a vast market for cattle; a mercantile man, as a place where a prodigious deal of business is done on 'Change; a dramatic enthusiast, as the grand scene of theatrical entertainments; a man of pleasure, as an assemblage of taverns, and the great emporium for ladies of easy virtue. But the intellectual man is struck with it, as comprehending the whole of human life in all its variety, the contemplation of which is inexhaustible.

* * * *

Talking of a London life, he said, "The happiness of London is not to be conceived but by those who have been in it. I will venture to say, there is more learning and science within the circumference of ten miles from where we now sit, than in all the rest of the kingdom." BOSWELL: "The only disadvantage is the great distance at which people live from one another." JOHNSON: "Yes, Sir; but that is occasioned by the largeness of it, which is the cause of all the other advantages."

London's Lure

BOSWELL: "Sometimes I have been in the humour of wishing to retire to a desert." JOHNSON: "Sir, you have desert enough in Scotland."

* * * * *

Johnson was much attached to London; he observed that a man stored his mind there better than anywhere else; and that in remote situations a man's body might be feasted, but his mind was starved, and his faculties apt to degenerate, from want of exercise and competition. No place, he said, cured a man's vanity or arrogance so well as London; for as no man was either great or good *per se*, but as compared with others not so good or great, he was sure to find in the metropolis many his equals, and some his superiors. He observed that a man in London was in less danger of falling in love indiscreetly than anywhere else; for there the difficulty of deciding between the conflicting pretensions of a vast variety of objects, kept him safe. He told me that he had frequently been offered country preferment, if he would consent to take orders; but he could not leave the improved society of the capital, or consent to exchange the exhilarating joys and splendid decorations of public life, for the obscurity, insipidity, and uniformity of remote situations.

* * * * *

"London is nothing to some people; but to a man whose pleasure is intellectual, London is the place. And there is no place where economy can

Some Literary Men in London

be so well practised as in London: more can be had here for the money, even by ladies, than anywhere else. You cannot play tricks with your fortune in a small place; you must make an uniform appearance. Here a lady may have well-furnished apartments, an elegant dress, without any meat in her kitchen."

I was amused by considering with how much ease and coolness he could write or talk to a friend, exhorting him not to suppose that happiness was not to be found as well in other places as in London; when he himself was at all times sensible of its being, comparatively speaking, a heaven upon earth. The truth is, that by those who, from sagacity, attention, and experience, have learnt the full advantage of London, its pre-eminence over every other place, not only for variety of enjoyment, but for comfort, will be felt with a philosophical exultation. The freedom from remark and petty censure, with which life may be passed there, is a circumstance which the man who knows the teasing restraint of a narrow circle must relish highly. Mr. Burke, whose orderly and amiable domestic habits might make the eye of observation less irksome to him than to most men, said once very pleasantly in my hearing, "Though I have the honour to represent Bristol, I should not like to live there; I should be obliged to be so much *upon my good behaviour.*" In London, a man may live in splendid society at one time, and in frugal

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retirement at another, without animadversion. There, and there alone, a man's own house is truly his *castle*, in which he can be in perfect safety from intrusion whenever he pleases. I never shall forget how well this was expressed to me one day by Mr. Meynell: "The chief advantage of London," said he, "is, that a man is always *so near his burrow.*"

James Boswell.

THE BRITISH MUSEUM

MOST Londoners—not all—have seen the British Museum Library. I speak *à cœur ouvert*, and pray the kindly reader to bear with me. I have seen all sorts of domes of Peters and Pauls, Sophia, Pantheon,—what not?—and have been struck by none of them as much as that catholic dome in Bloomsbury, under which our million volumes are housed. What peace, what love, what truth, what beauty, what happiness for all, what generous kindness for you and me, are here spread out! It seems to me one cannot sit down in that place without a heart full of grateful reverence. I own I have said my grace at the table, and to have thanked Heaven for this my English birthright, freely to partake of these bountiful books, and to speak the truth I find there.

William Makepeace Thackeray.

XIV
IMPRESSIONS



Impressions

LONDON'S IDOLS

O HER lamps of a night! her rich goldsmiths, print-shops, toy-shops, mercers, hardwaremen, pastry-cooks, St. Paul's Churchyard, the Strand, Exeter Change, Charing Cross, with the man *upon* a black horse! These are thy gods, O London.

Charles Lamb.

RED ROOFS OF LONDON

TILES and tile-roofs have a curious way of tumbling to pieces in an irregular and eye-pleasing manner. The roof-tree bends, bows a little under the weight, curves in, and yet preserves a sharpness at each end. The Chinese exaggerate this curve of set purpose. Our English curve is softer, being the product of time, which always works in true taste. The mystery of tile-laying is not known to every one; for to all appearance tiles seem to be put on over a thin bed of hay or hay-like stuff. Lately they have begun to use some sort of tarpaulin or a coarse material of that kind; but the old tiles, I fancy, were comfortably placed on a shake-down of hay. When one slips off, little bits of hay stick up; and to these the sparrows come, removing it bit by bit to line their nests. If they can find a gap they get in, and a fresh couple is started in life. By-and-

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by a chimney is overthrown during a twist of the wind, and half-a-dozen tiles are shattered. Time passes; and at last the tiler arrives to mend the mischief. His labour leaves a light red patch on the dark dull red of the breadth about it. After another while the leaks along the ridge need plastering: mortar is laid on to stay the inroad of wet, adding a dull white and forming a rough, uncertain undulation along the general drooping curve. Yellow edgings of straw project under the eaves—the work of the sparrows. A cluster of blue-tinted pigeons gathers about the chimney-side; the smoke that comes out of the stack droops and floats sideways, downwards, as if the chimney enjoyed the smother as a man enjoys his pipe. Shattered here and cracked yonder, some missing, some overlapping in curves, the tiles have an aspect of irregular existence. They are not fixed, like slates, as it were for ever: they have a newness, and then a middle-age, and a time of decay like human beings.

Richard Jefferies.

THE ROMANCE OF LONDON

THERE are certain characteristics, qualities, of London which I am aware of not calling aright, but which I will call *sentiments* for want of some better word. One of them was the feel of the night air, especially late in the season, when

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there was a waste and weariness in it as if the vast human endeavour for pleasure and success had exhaled its despair upon it. Whatever there was of disappointment in one's past, of apprehension in one's future, came to the surface of the spirit, and asserted its unity with the collective melancholy. It was not exactly a *Weltschmerz*; that is as out-dated as the romantic movement; but it was a sort of scientific relinquishment which was by no means scornful of others, or too appreciative of one's own unrecognized worth. Through the senses it related itself to the noises of the quiescing city, to the smell of its tormented dust, to the whiff of a casual cigar, or the odour of the herbage and foliage in the park or square that one was passing, one may not be more definite about what was perhaps nothing at all. But I fancy that relinquishment of any sort would be easier in London than in cities of simpler interest or smaller population. For my own part I was content to deny many knowledges that I would have liked to believe myself possessed of, and to go about clothed in my ignorance as in a garment, or defended by it as by armour. There was a sort of luxury in passing through streets memorable for a thousand things and as dense with associations as Long Island with mosquitoes when the winds are low, and in reflecting that I need not be ashamed for neglecting in part what no man could know in whole. I really suppose that upon any other terms

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the life of the cultivated American would be hardly safe from his own violence in London. If one did not shut oneself out from the complex appeal to one's higher self one could hardly go to one's tailor or one's hatter or one's shoemaker, on those missions which, it is a national superstition with us, may be more inexpensively fulfilled there than at home. The best way is to begin by giving up everything, by frankly saying to yourself that you will not be bothered, that man's days of travel are full of trouble, and that you are going to get what little joy you can out of them as you go along. Then, perhaps, on some errand of quite ignoble purport, you will be seized with the knowledge that in the very spot where you stand one of the most significant things in history happened.

H. D. Howells.

THE CROWNLESS CITY

NOT Florence, nor the Baian bay, I sing,
Nor sunny vine-clad slopes of southern France
Nor gardens where the Spanish maidens
dance
With laughter in a white-armed starry ring,
Not unto Palestine, nor Greece, I cling,
As many with a longing backward glance,—
Through London's flowerless gloom my steps
advance,
The crownless city seeks a crownless king.

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Mine are the suns of morning, looming red
Through misery and smoke, till gleams of blue,
Occasional at midday, glisten through,
Across our patient care-worn foreheads shed:
Mine is the sorrow,—mine the imperial head,
The sinless locks, of London born anew.

George Barlow.

A MAGICAL SPECTACLE

THE magical spectacle absorbed him. He saw on all sides churches and chimneys rising up out of chaos in a liturgy of work and prayer, not one theatre piercing the immense monotony; for pleasure has no steeple, and its bells no belfry. Work and prayer, he thought, prayer and work, are the burden of London's song. He fell in love with the hideousness of London; yet it seemed to him that it was not wholly hideous, for the smoke of London appeared to him to be the loveliest thing in all London. He watched it trailing in comet wisps from thousands of slender chimneys, softening the dreary acres of brick, veiling the doleful leagues of slate, and taking fantastic forms and tones in the light that poured through torn clouds—spirals and whorls, wreaths and aureoles of pale turquoise and tender grey, faint orange and pallid purple, violet and tawny white. Lovely, too,

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he thought, were the trees crying their green cry to the sun . . . Lovely also were the pranks and gambollings of the smoke-filtered light, flickering and waving magically over the shallow bowl of towns, here glistening like a dew-drop on casual roof and sudden window, there blazing like a smokeless conflagration. It seemed to him sad that the sun never shone simultaneously on the whole of London, that city of radiant shadows. Ah, how the river lay chilly and dark on the farther side of Blackfriars Bridge—on the hither side how warm and bright! How funereal was the pall of smoke that hung over Whitechapel and Shoreditch, Hoxton and Haggerston and Bethnal Green, sad-coloured names that seem to weep in answer to the careless smiles of Mayfair and Belgravia, Kensington and Bayswater, Regent's Park and Marylebone!

James Douglas.

MARGARET OGILVY'S DREAM OF LONDON

NOT less than mine became her desire that I should have my way—but, ah, the iron seats in that park of horrible repute, and that bare room at the top of many flights of stairs! While I was away at college she drained all available libraries for books about those who go to London to

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live by the pen, and they all told the same shuddering tale. London, which she never saw, was to her a monster that licked up country youths as they stepped from the train; there were the garrets in which they sat abject, and the park seats where they passed the night. Those park seats were the monster's glaring eyes to her, and as I go by them now she is nearer to me than when I am in any other part of London. I daresay that when night comes, this Hyde Park which is so gay by day, is haunted by the ghosts of many mothers, who run, wild-eyed, from seat to seat, looking for their sons.

But if we could dodge those dreary seats she longed to see me try my luck, and I sought to exclude them from the picture by drawing maps of London with Hyde Park left out. London was as strange to me as to her, but long before I was shot upon it I knew it by maps, and drew them more accurately than I could draw them now. Many a time she and I took our jaunt together through the map, and were most gleeful, popping into telegraph offices to wire my father and sister that we should not be home till late, winking to my books in lordly shop-windows, lunching at restaurants (and remembering not to call it dinner), saying "How do?" to Mr. Alfred Tennyson when we passed him in Regent Street, calling at publishers' offices for cheque, when "Will you take care of it, or shall I?" I asked gaily, and she

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would be certain to reply, "I'm thinking we'd better take it to the bank and get the money," for she always felt surer of money than cheques; so to the bank we went ("Two tens and the rest in gold"), and thence straightway (by cab) to the place where you buy sealskin coats for middling old ladies. But ere the laugh was done the park would come through the map like a blot.

J. M. Barrie.

AN ATTACK ON LONDON

H ERE malice, rapine, accident conspire,
And now a rabble rages, now a fire;
Their ambush here relentless ruffians lay,
And here the fell attorney prowls for prey;
Here falling houses thunder on your bead,
And here a female atheist talks you dead.

* * * * *

London! the needy villain's gen'ral home,
The common sewer of Paris and of Rome;
With eager thirst, by folly or by fate,
Sucks in the dregs of each corrupted state.

Samuel Johnson.

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THE GREEN PLACES OF LONDON

IN the body of our work will be found notices of other trees and green spots, that surprise the observer in the thick of the noise and smoke. Many of them are in churchyards. Others have disappeared during the progress of building. Many courts and passages are named from trees that once stood in them, as Vine and Elm Court, Fig-tree Court, Green-arbour Court, etc. It is not surprising that *garden-houses*, as they were called, should have formerly abounded in Holborn, in Bunhill Row, and other (at that time) suburban places. We notice the fact, in order to observe how fond the poets were of occupying houses of this description. Milton seems to have made a point of having one. The only London residence of Chapman which is known, was in Old Street Road; doubtless at that time a rural suburb. Beaumont and Fletcher's house, on the Surrey side of the Thames (for they lived as well as wrote together), most probably had a garden: and Dryden's house in Gerard Street looked into the garden of the mansion built by the Earls of Leicester. A tree, or even a flower, put in a window, in the streets of a great city (and the London citizens, to their credit, are fond of flowers), affects the eye something in the same way as the hand-organs, which bring unexpected music to the ear. They refresh the commonplaces of life, shed a harmony through the busy discord, and appeal to

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those first sources of emotion, which are associated with the remembrance of all that is young and innocent. They seem also to present to us a portion of the tranquillity we think we are labouring for, and the desire of which is felt as an earnest that we shall realise it somewhere, either in this world or in the next. Above all, they render us more cheerful for the performance of present duties ; and the smallest seed of this kind, dropt into the heart of man, is worth more, and may terminate in better fruits, than anybody but a great poet could tell us.

Leigh Hunt.

“ RED-COATS ”

THERE were large barracks in our neighbourhood where one might have glimpses of the intimate life of the troops, such as shirt-sleeved figures smoking short pipes at the windows, or red coats hanging from the sills, or sometimes a stately bear-skin dangling from a shutter by its throat-latch. We were also near to the Chelsea Hospital, where soldiering had come to its last word in the old pensioners pottering about the garden-paths or sitting in the shade or sun. Wherever a red coat appeared it had its honourable obsequy in the popular interest, and if I might venture to sum up my impression of what I saw of soldiering in London

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I should say that it keeps its romance for the spectator far more than soldiering does in the Continental capitals, where it seems a slavery consciously sad and clearly discerned. It may be that a glamour clings to the English soldier because he has voluntarily enslaved himself as a recruit, and has not been torn an unwilling captive from his home and work, like the conscripts of other countries. On the same terms our own military are romantic.

H. D. Howells.

THE PLAY-HOUSE

UNDER a broad archway, gaily lighted, the broad and happy way to a theatre, there is a small crowd waiting, and among them two ladies, with their backs to the photographs and bills, looking out into the street. They stand side by side, evidently quite oblivious and indifferent to the motley folk about them, chatting and laughing, taking the wet and windy wretchedness of the night as a joke. They are both plump and rosy-cheeked, dark eyes gleaming and red lips parted; both decidedly good-looking, much too rosy and full-faced, too well fed and comfortable to take a prize from Burne-Jones, very worldly people in the roast-beef sense. Their faces glow in the bright light—merry sea-coal-fire faces; they have never turned their backs on the good things of this life. “Never shut

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the door on good fortune," as Queen Isabella of Spain says. Wind and rain may howl and splash, but here are two faces they never have touched—rags and battered shoes drift along the pavement—no wet feet or cold necks here. Best of all, they glow with good spirits, they laugh, they chat; they are full of enjoyment, clothed thickly with health and happiness, as their shoulders — good wide shoulders—are thickly wrapped in warmest furs. The 'bus goes on, and they are lost to view; if you came back in an hour you would find them still there without doubt—still jolly, chatty, smiling, waiting perhaps for the stage, but anyhow far removed, like the goddesses on Olympus, from the splash and misery of London. Drive on.

Richard Jefferies.

THE CITY'S SADNESS

I HEARD of the city's greatness,
And I came from afar to see
The wonderful place called London,
And its splendours dazzled me.
Miles of beautiful shop-fronts!
Glitter and warmth and light!
The place seemed busy the live-long day,
And merry the live-long night,
It seemed like the palace Aladdin built
All marble and jewels, painted and gilt.

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But I closer looked, and the glory
Faded; it was but a show.
Black fog fell over the city
In lieu of the sunlight's glow:
And I saw, in the mist-clothed places
Where all had appeared so bright,
Weary and half-starved faces,
Sorrow by day and by night.
The city that once had shone so fair
Seemed full of a horror of fierce despair.

I looked yet again, and a measure
Of hope returned to me.
I saw, and I took deep pleasure
In a blossoming lilac-tree.
And I saw two lovers sitting
Side by side in the Park:
Then I saw the red moon flitting
Over the Thames in the dark,
And I knew that even on London town
The stars and the beautiful moon smile down.

George Barlow.

THE WEALTH OF LONDON

OTHER capitals have had their turn, and others will overtake and outstrip her; but where is one in these times to compare with London? Where in Europe will you see streets so well

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ordered, squares so spacious, houses so comfortable, yet elegant, as in this mile east and south of Hyde Park? Where such solid, self-respecting wealth as in our City? Where such merchant-princes and adventurers as your Whittingtons and Greshams? Where half its commerce? and where a commerce touched with one tithe of its imagination? Where such a river, for trade as for pageants? On what other shore two buildings side by side so famous, the one for just laws, civil security, liberty with obedience; the other for heroic virtues resumed, with their propagating dust, into the faith which sowed all and, having reaped, renewes?

A. T. Quiller-Couch.

THE PIGEONS AT THE BRITISH MUSEUM

THE front of the British Museum stands in the sunlight clearly marked against the firm blue of the northern sky. The blue appears firm as if solid above the angle of the stonework, for while looking towards it—towards the north—the rays do not come through the azure, which is therefore colour without life. It seems nearer than the southern sky, it descends and forms a close background to the building; as you approach you seem to come nearer to the blue surface rising at its rear. The dark edges of sloping stone are

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distinct and separate, but not sharp; the hue of the stone is toned by time and weather, and is so indefinite as to have lost its hardness. Those small rounded bodies upon the cornice are pigeons resting in the sun, so motionless and neutral-tinted that they might be mistaken for some portion of the carving. A double gilt ring, a circle in a circle, at the feet of an allegorical figure, gleams brightly against the dark surface. The sky already seems farther away seen between the boles of stone, perpetual shade dwells in their depth, but two or three of the pigeons fluttering down are searching for food on the sunlit gravel at the bottom of the steps. To them the building is merely a rock pierced with convenient caverns; they use its exterior for their purpose, but penetrate no farther. With air and light, the sunlit gravel, the green lawn between it and the outer railings—with these they are concerned, and with these only. The heavy roll of the traffic in Oxford Street, audible here, is nothing to them; the struggle for money does not touch them, they let it go by. Nor the many minds searching and re-searching in the great Library—this mental toil is no more to them than the lading of the waggons in the street. Neither the tangible product nor the intellectual attainment is of any value—only the air and light. There are idols in the galleries within upon whose sculptured features the hot Eastern sun shone thousands of years since. They were made by human effort, however mis-

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taken, and they were the outcome of human thought and handiwork. The doves fluttered about the temples in those days, full only of the air and light. They fluttered about the better temples of Greece and round the porticoes where philosophy was born. Still only the light, the sunlight, the air of heaven. We labour on and think, and carve our idols, and the pen never ceases from its labours; but the lapse of the centuries has left us in the same place. The doves who have not laboured nor travailed in thought possess the sunlight. Is not theirs the preferable portion?

Richard Jefferies.

THE GONDOLA OF LONDON

"IT is a wonderful place," said he, "this London; a nation, not a city; with a population greater than some kingdoms, and districts as different as if they were under different governments and spoke different languages. And what do I know of it? I have been living here six months, and my life has been passed in a park, two or three squares, and half a dozen streets!"

So he walked on and soon crossed Oxford Street, like the Rhine a natural boundary, and then got into Portland Place, and then found himself in the New Road, and then he hailed a cruising hansom, which he had previously observed was well-horsed.

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"'Tis the gondola of London," said Lothair as he sprang in.

"Drive on till I tell you to stop."

And the hansom drove on, through endless boulevards, some bustling, some dingy, some tawdry and flaring, some melancholy and mean; rows of garden gods, planted on the walls of yards full of vases and divinities of concrete, huge railway halls, monster hotels, dissenting chapels in the form of Gothic churches, quaint ancient almshouses that were once built in the fields, and tea-gardens, and stingo houses, and knackers' yards. They were in a district far beyond the experience of Lothair, which indeed had been exhausted when he passed Eustonia, and from that he had been long separated. The way was broad but ill-lit, with houses of irregular size but generally of low elevation, and sometimes detached in smoke-dried gardens. The road was becoming a bridge which crossed a canal, with barges, and wharves, and timber-yards, when their progress was arrested by a crowd. It seemed a sort of procession; there was a banner, and the lamplight fell upon a religious emblem. Lothair was interested, and desired the driver not to endeavour to advance. The procession was crossing the road and entering a building.

Benjamin Disraeli.

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THE CRIES OF LONDON

G LADLY at length I quit my wooden hive;
Fatigued, at busy London I arrive,
Parent of Sin, and Nastiness, and Noise:
By coach and cart, and wheelbarrow and dray,
Through motley mob I force my sighing way;
Pimps, porters, chairmen, chimney-sweepers' boys:

Saluted as I pass along,
By all the various Imps of *Song*;
This, crying "Rabbits, rabbits," wild fowl that,
Another, mackrel, salmon, oyster, sprat.

With such a howling ear-distracting note,
And Mouth extended as a Barn-door wide,
That fish and flesh forsooth may be *well* cried,
A man might leap into each cavern throat.

In Covent Garden, at the Hummums, now
I sit; but after many a curse and vow,
Never to see the madding City more:
Where barrows truckling o'er the pavement roll;
And, what is horror to a tuneful soul,
Where Asses, asses greeting, *love-songs* roar;
Which Asses, that the Garden square adorn,
Must Lark-like be the heralds of my morn.

Peter Pindar.

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A GIRL'S DREAM OF LONDON

THERE is commonly in every coach a passenger enwrapped in silent expectation, whose joy is more sincere and whose hopes are more exalted. The virgin whom the last summer released from her governess, and who is now going between her mother and her aunt to try the fortune of her wit and beauty, suspects no fallacy in the gay representation. She believes herself passing into another world, and images *London* as an elysian region, where every hour has its proper pleasure, where nothing is seen but the blaze of wealth, and nothing heard but merriment and flattery; where the morning always rises on a show, and the evening closes on a ball; where the eyes are used only to sparkle, and the feet only to dance.

Samuel Johnson.

LONDON'S APPEARANCE OF POVERTY

JUDGE, then, my disappointment on entering London, to see no signs of that opulence so much talked of abroad: wherever I turn I am presented with a gloomy solemnity in the houses, the streets, and the inhabitants; none of that beautiful gilding which makes a principal ornament in Chinese architecture. The streets of Nankin are sometimes strewed with gold-leaf; very different are

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those of London: in the midst of their pavements a great lazy puddle moves muddily along; heavy-laden machines, with wheels of unwieldy thickness, crowd up every passage; so that a stranger, instead of finding time for observation, is often happy if he has time to escape from being crushed to pieces.

The houses borrow very few ornaments from architecture; their chief decoration seems to be a paltry piece of painting hung out at their doors or windows, at once a proof of their indigence and vanity: their vanity, in each having one of those pictures exposed to public view; and their indigence in being unable to get them better painted. In this respect, the fancy of their painters is also deplorable. Could you believe it? I have seen five black lions and three blue boars in less than the circuit of half a mile; and yet you know that animals of these colours are nowhere to be found except in the wild imaginations of Europe.

From these circumstances in their buildings, I am induced to conclude that the nation is actually poor; and that, like the Persians, they make a splendid figure everywhere but at home. The proverb of Xixofon is, that a man's riches may be seen in his eyes; if we judge the English by this rule, there is not a poorer nation under the sun.

Oliver Goldsmith.

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A MIGHTY SEA

LONDON, that great sea, whose ebb and flow
At once is deaf and loud, and on the shore
Vomits its wrecks, and still howls on for more.
Yet in its depths what treasures!

P. B. Shelley.

SUNLIGHT IN A LONDON SQUARE

THERE are days now and again when the summer broods in Trafalgar Square; the flood of light from a cloudless sky gathers and grows, thickening the air; the houses enclose the beams as water is enclosed in a cup. Sideways from the white-painted walls light is reflected; upwards from the broad, heated pavement in the centre light and heat ascend; from the blue heaven it presses downwards. Not only from the sun—one point—but from the entire width of the visible blue the brilliant stream flows. Summer is enclosed between the banks of houses—all summer's glow and glory of exceeding brightness. The blue panel overhead has but a stray fleck of cloud, a Cupid drawn on the panel in pure white, but made indefinite by distance. The joyous swallows climb high into the illuminated air till the eye, daunted by the glow can scarce detect their white breasts as they turn.

Slant shadows from the western side give but a

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margin of contrast; the rays are reflected through them, and they are only shadows of shadows. At the edges their faint sloping lines are seen in the air, where a million motes impart a fleeting solidity to the atmosphere. A pink-painted front, the golden eagle of the West, golden lettering, every chance strip and speck of colour is washed in the dazzling light, made clear and evident. The hands and numerals of the clock yonder are distinct and legible, the white dial-plate polished; a window suddenly opened throws a flash across the square. Eastwards the air in front of the white walls quivers, heat and light reverberating visibly, and the dry flowers on the window-sills burn red and yellow in the glare. Southwards green trees, far down the street, stand, as it seems almost at the foot of the chiselled tower of Parliament—chiselled in straight lines and perpendicular grooves, each of which casts a shadow into itself. Again the corners advanced before the main wall throw shadows on it, and the hollow casements draw shadows into their cavities. Thus, in the bright light against the blue sky the tower pencils itself with a dark crayon, and is built not of stone, but of light and shadow.

Richard Jefferies.

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A SUBURBAN IMPRESSION OF LONDON

THERE were but two points of view from which the town was regarded in the suburb, and the inhabitants chose this view according to their sex. To the men London was a counting-house, and certainly some miles of yellow brick mansions and flashing glasshouses testified that the view was a profitable one. To the women it was the alluringly wicked abode of society, and they held their hands before their faces when they mentioned it, to hide their yearning. Occasionally they imagined they caught a glimpse into it, when a minister from one of the states in the Balkan Peninsula strayed down to shed a tallow-candle lustre over a garden party. To both these views Drake had listened with the air of a man listening to an impertinence, and his attitude towards the former view showed particularly the strength of the peculiar impression which London had made on him, since he always placed the acquisition of a fortune as an aim before himself.

He thought of London, in fact, as a countryman might, with all a countryman's sense of its mystery and romance, intensified in him by the daily sight of its domes and spires. He saw it clothed by the changing seasons, now ringed in green, now shrouded in white; on summer mornings, when it lay clearly defined like a finished model and the

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sun sparkled on the vanes, set the long lines of windows ablaze in the Houses of Parliament, and turned the river into a riband of polished steel; or, again, when the cupola of St. Paul's and the Clock Tower at Westminster pierced upwards through a level of fog, as though hung in the mid-air; or when mists, shredded by a south wind, swirled and writhed about the roof-tops until the city itself seemed to take fantastic shapes and melt to a substance no more solid than the mists themselves.

A. E. W. Mason.

THE LIBERTY OF LONDON

O LONDON, comprehensive word!
Whose sound, though scarce in whispers heard,
Breathes independence!—if I share
That first of blessings, I can bear
Ev'n with thy fogs and smoky air.
Of leisure fond, of freedom fonder,
O grant me in thy streets to wander;
Grant me thy cheerful morning-walk,
Thy dinner and thy evening-talk.
What though I'm forced my doors to make fast?
What though no cream be mine for breakfast?
Though knaves around me cheat and plunder,
And fires can scarcely be kept under,
Though guilt in triumph stalks abroad
By Bow and Marlborough Street unawed,

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And many a rook finds many a pigeon
In law, and physic, and religion,
Eager to help a thriving trade on,
And proud and happy to be preyed on?—
What signify such paltry blots?
The glorious Sun himself has spots.

Henry Luttrell.

THE CANAL BRIDGE

IT is a short bridge, and links together two sections of a busy thoroughfare in North London. Tram-lines are scored across the centre of it, and trams and 'buses and multifarious carts and carriages jingle and thunder over it incessantly all day.

Leaning against the dingy brick parapet, one looks down into the deep, sinuous trench of the canal and sees its muddy, yellow waters twinkling sluggishly. Thirty yards or so above the bridge the narrow stream is dammed by a lock, and seething little jets of water are for ever straining out through gaps in the leaky gates. By day, while you lounge and look with the roar of the street in your ears, these escaping jets spout and fall and foam unheard; but when the night gathers and the long street grows quiet, and the lock has dwindled to a formless smudge on the gloom below, they become weirdly audible, and hiss and crackle in the dark unseen.

Hereabouts the canal winds through a poor,

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densely-populated neighbourhood, and is, for the most part, closely hemmed in and overshadowed by high blind walls and the backs of squalid houses. It has a towing-path on one side only, and at frequent intervals, from morning till night, a sturdy horse will round the distant curve of the channel leisurely, towing a still invisible barge; and by the horse slouches a thick-set driver, who is either smoking silently, with his hands in his pockets, or perfunctorily cracking a whip and growling. Half a minute later the barge itself rounds the curve into sight, with its cargo of hay or bricks or boxes or barrels, hooded by a tightly tied tarpaulin, and in the stern a stolid man who leans against the tiller and sucks ruminatively at a remnant of clay pipe. Near his feet yawns a narrow hatchway, and beside it the zinc chimney of the cabin flutters an attenuated pennon of smoke. As often as not a terrier runs along perilous edges of the boat, sniffing restlessly to and fro, or lies coiled asleep on the top of the cargo.

Presently the horse comes to a standstill; the barge drifts into the lock; the gate behind it closes and shuts it in. During a raucous but amicable exchange of views between the bargee and the lock-keeper, the barge slowly sinks betwixt the two gates until all but the upper half of the cargo and the man on board is hidden from the gaze; then the hither gate opens and the clumsy vessel blunders out, the whip cracks, the horse's hoofs click and

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grind on the gravel path, the tow-rope jerks dripping up from the water and stretches taut, and the barge, gradually increasing its speed, glides forward and vanishes quietly under the bridge.

There has been no bustle, no haste at all; the whole manœuvre has been carried through methodically and without the faintest glimmering of excitement. A few minutes elapse, then a similar barge, carrying a somewhat similar cargo and a similar dog, and navigated by similar men and a similar horse, crawls into view, is detained a little in the lock's embrace, and goes on as the one before it went; another barge succeeds, and another, and another, all looking so much alike in essential details, and all appearing and vanishing so exactly in the same fashion at exactly the same points, that from idly doubting whether it really is a different craft every time, one succumbs to a hazy, pleasantly-bewildered sense of the unreality of it, to a feeling that one is asleep and dreaming, and does but behold, on a visionary canal, a nightmare of an impossible barge that is always coming and going, and never gone.

A. St. John Adcock.

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THE LONDON OMNIBUS

TO the American city-dweller the London omnibus is archaic. Except for the few slow stages that lumber up and down Fifth Avenue, we have hardly anything of the omnibus kind in the whole length and breadth of our continent, and it is with perpetual astonishment and amusement that one finds it still prevailing in London, quite as if it were not as gross an anachronism as the war-chariot or the sedan-chair. It is ugly, and bewilderingly painted over with the names of its destinations, and clad with signs of patent medicines and new plays and breakfast foods in every colour but the colours of the rainbow. It is ponderous and it rumbles forward with a sound of thunder, and the motion of a steamer when they put the table-racks on. Seen from the pavement, or from the top of another omnibus, it is of barbaric majesty; not, indeed, in the single example, but as part of the interminable line of omnibuses coming towards you. Then its clumsiness is lost in the collective uncouthness which becomes of a tremendous grandeur. The procession bears onward whole populations lifted high in the air, and swaying and lurching with the elephantine gait of things which can no more capsize than they can keep an even pace. Of all the sights of London streets, this procession of the omnibuses is the most impressive, and the common herd of Londoners of both sexes which it bears aloft seems

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to suffer a change into something almost as rich as strange. They are no longer ordinary or less than ordinary men and women bent on the shabby businesses that preoccupy the most of us; they are conquering princes, making a progress in a long triumph, and looking down upon a lower order of human beings from their wobbling steeps. It enhances their apparent dignity that they whom they look down upon are not merely the drivers of trucks and wagons of low degree, but often ladies of title in their family carriages, under the care of the august family coachman and footman, or gentlemen driving in their own traps or carts, or fares in the hansom that steal their swift course through and by these ranks; the omnibuses are always the most monumental fact of the scene. They dominate it in bulk and height; they form the chief impulse of the tremendous movement, and it is they that choke from time to time the channel of the mighty torrent, and helplessly hold it in the arrest of a *block*.

H. D. Howells.

A SUNDAY IN LONDON

ON this sacred day the gigantic monster is charmed into repose. The intolerable din and struggle of the week are at an end. The shops are shut. The fires of forges and manufactories are extinguished; and the sun, no longer obscured by

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murky clouds of smoke, pours down a sober, yellow radiance into the quiet streets. The few pedestrians we meet, instead of hurrying forth with anxious countenances, move leisurely along; their brows are smoothed from the wrinkles of business and care; they have put on their Sunday looks, and Sunday manners, with their Sunday clothes, and are cleansed in mind as well as in person.

And now the melodious clangour of bells from church towers summons their several flocks to the fold. Forth issues from his mansion the family of the decent tradesman, the small children in the advance; then the citizen and his comely spouse, followed by the grown-up daughters, with small morocco-bound prayer-books in the fold of their pocket-handkerchiefs. The housemaid looks after them from the window, admiring the finery of the family, and receiving, perhaps, a nod and smile from her young mistresses, at whose toilet she has assisted.

Now rumbles along the carriage of some magnate of the city, peradventure an alderman or a sheriff, and now the patter of many feet announces a procession of charity scholars, in uniforms of antique cut, and each with a prayer-book under his arm.

The ringing of bells is at an end; the rumbling of the carriage has ceased; the patterning of feet is heard no more; the flocks are folded in ancient churches, cramped up in by-lanes and corners of the crowded city, where the vigilant beadle keeps watch,

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like the shepherd's dog, round the threshold of the sanctuary. For a time everything is hushed; but soon is heard the deep pervading sound of the organ, rolling and vibrating through the empty lanes and courts; and the sweet chanting of the choir making them resound with melody and praise. Never have I been more sensible of the sanctifying effect of church music, than when I heard it thus poured forth, like a river of joy, through the inmost recesses of this great metropolis, elevating it, as it were, from all the sordid pollutions of the week; and bearing the poor world-worn soul on a tide of triumphant harmony to heaven.

The morning service is at an end. The streets are again alive with the congregations returning to their homes, but soon again relapse into silence. Now comes on the Sunday dinner, which, to the city tradesman, is a meal of some importance. There is more leisure for social enjoyment at the board. Members of the family can now gather together, who are separated by the laborious occupations of the week. A school-boy may be permitted on that day to come to the paternal home; an old friend of the family takes his accustomed Sunday seat at the board, tells over his well-known stories, and rejoices young and old with his well-known jokes.

On Sunday afternoon the city pours forth its legions to breathe the fresh air and enjoy the sunshine of the parks and rural environs. Satirists may

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say what they please about the rural enjoyments of a London citizen on Sunday, but to me there is something delightful in beholding the poor prisoner of the crowded and dusty city enabled thus to come forth once a week and throw himself upon the green bosom of nature. He is like a child restored to the mother's breast ; and they who first spread out these noble parks and magnificent pleasure-grounds which surround this huge metropolis, have done at least as much for its health and morality as if they had spent the amount of cost in hospitals, prisons, and penitentiaries.

Washington Irving.

SUNDAY IN LONDON

THE seventh day this—the Jubilee of men !
London ! right well thou know'st the day of
prayer :

Then thy spruce citizen, washed artisan,
And smug apprentice gulp their weekly air :
Thy coach of hackney, whiskey, one-horse chair,
And humblest gig through sandy suburbs whirl,
To Hampstead, Brentford, Harrow, make repair ;
Till the tired jade the wheel forgets to hurl,
Provoking envious gibe from each pedestrian churl.

Lord Byron.

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THE SUFFERING OF LONDON

ONE has not the alternative of speaking of London as a whole, for the simple reason that there is no such thing as the whole of it. It is immeasurable—the embracing arms never meet. Rather it is a collection of many wholes, and of which of them is it most important to speak? Inevitably there must be a choice, and I know of none more scientific than simply to leave out what we may have to apologize for. The ugliness, the "rookeries" the brutalities, the night-aspect of many of the streets, the gin-shops and the hour when they are cleared out before closing—there are many elements of this kind which have to be counted out before a genial summary can be made.

And yet I should not go so far as to say that it is a condition of such geniality to close one's eyes upon the immense misery; on the contrary, I think it is partly because we are irremediably conscious of that dark gulf that the most general appeal of the great city remains exactly what it is, the largest chapter of human accidents. I have no idea of what the future evolution of the strangely mingled monster may be; whether the poor will improve away the rich, or the rich will expropriate the poor, or they will all continue to dwell together on their present imperfect terms of intercourse. Certain it is at any rate that the impression of suffering is a part of the general vibration; it is one of the things

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that mingle with all the others to make the sound that is supremely dear to the consistent London-lover—the rumble of the tremendous human mill. This is the note which, in all its modulations, haunts and fascinates and inspires him. And whether or no he may succeed in keeping the misery out of the picture, he will freely confess that the latter is not spoiled for him by some of its duskiest shades. We are far from liking London well enough till we like its defects: the dense darkness of much of its winter, the soot on the chimney-pots and everywhere else, the early lamplight, the brown blur of the houses the splashing of hansoms in Oxford Street or the Strand on December afternoons.

Henry James.

AN IMPRESSIONIST PICTURE

A MIGHTY mass of brick, and smoke, and
 shipping,
 Dirty and dusky, but as wide as eye
Could reach, with here and there a sail just skipping
 In sight, then lost amidst the forestry
Of masts; a wilderness of steeples peeping
 On tiptoe through their sea-coal canopy;
A huge, dun Cupola, like a foolscap crown
On a fool's head—and there is London Town!

Lord Byron.

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THE VASTNESS OF LONDON

WHAT is most striking in London is its vastness. It is the illimitable feeling that gives it a special character. London is not grand. It possesses only one of the qualifications of a grand city, size; but it wants the equally important one, beauty. It is the union of these two qualities that produced the grand cities, the Romes, the Babylons, the hundred portals of the Pharaohs; multitudes and magnificence; the millions influenced by art. Grand cities are unknown since the beautiful has ceased to be the principle of invention. Paris, of modern capitals, has aspired to this character; but if Paris be a beautiful city, it certainly is not a grand one; its population is too limited, and, from the nature of their dwellings, they cover a comparatively small space. Constantinople is picturesque; nature has furnished a sublime site, but it has little architectural splendour, and you reach the environs with a fatal facility. London overpowers us with its vastness.

Place a Forum or an Acropolis in its centre, and the effect of the metropolitan mass, which now has neither head nor heart, instead of being stupefying, would be ennobling. Nothing more completely represents a nation than a public building. A member of parliament only represents at the most the united constituencies: but the Palace of the Sovereign, a National Gallery or a Museum baptized

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with the name of the country, these are monuments to which all should be able to look up with pride, and which should exercise an elevating influence upon the spirit of the humblest. What is their influence in London? Let us not criticise what all condemn. But how remedy the evil? What is wanted in architecture, as in so many things, is, a man. Shall we find a refuge in a Committee of Taste? Escape from the mediocrity of many? We only multiply our feebleness, and aggravate our deficiencies. But one suggestion might be made. No profession in England has done its duty until it has furnished its victim. The pure administration of justice dates from the deposition of Macclesfield. Even our boasted navy never achieved a great victory until we shot an admiral. Suppose an architect were hanged? Terror has its inspiration as well as competition.

Though London is vast, it is very monotonous. All those new districts that have sprung up within the last half-century, the creatures of our commercial and colonial wealth, it is impossible to conceive anything more tame, more insipid, more uniform. Pancras is like Mary-le-bone, Mary-le-bone is like Paddington; the streets resemble each other; you must read the names of the squares before you venture to knock at a door. This amount of building capital ought to have produced a great city. What an opportunity for architecture suddenly summoned to furnish habitations for a population equal

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to that of the city of Bruxelles, and a population, too, of great wealth. Mary-le-bone ought to have produced a revolution in our domestic architecture. It did nothing. It was built by Act of Parliament. Parliament prescribed even a façade. It is Parliament to whom we are indebted for your Gloucester Places, and Baker Streets, and Harley Streets, and Wimpole Streets, and all those flat, dull, spiritless streets resembling each other like a large family of plain children with Portland Place and Portman Square for their respectable parents. The influence of our Parliamentary Government upon the fine arts is a subject worth pursuing. The power that produced Baker Street as a model for street architecture in its celebrated Building Act, is the power that prevented Whitehall from being completed, and which sold to foreigners all the pictures which the King of England had collected to civilize his people.

In our own days we have witnessed the rapid creation of a new metropolitan quarter, built solely for the aristocracy by an aristocrat. The Belgrave district is as monotonous as Mary-le-bone; and is so contrived as to be at the same time insipid and tawdry.

Where London becomes more interesting is Charing Cross. Looking to Northumberland House, and turning your back upon Trafalgar Square, the Strand is perhaps the finest street in Europe, blending the architecture of many periods: and its river

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ways are a peculiar feature and rich with associations. Fleet Street with its Temple, is not unworthy of being contiguous to the Strand. The fire of London has deprived us of the delight of a real old quarter of the city; but some bits remain, and everywhere there is a stirring multitude, and a great crush and crash of carts and wains. The Inns of Court, and the quarters in the vicinity of the port. Thames Street, Tower Hill, Billingsgate, Wapping, Rotherhithe, are the best parts of London: they are full of character: the buildings bear a nearer relation to what the people are doing than in the more polished quarters.

Benjamin Disraeli.

THE LONDON STREETS

O F old the streets were sad and grim:
They stretched along, one mass of grey,
Vast leagues on leagues of saddening hue
That changed not if the heaven were blue
Or if the wintry sky were dim
The same from day to day.

But now the London streets are bright:
In this one point our victory's won;
Pure country flowers adorn our streets
And fill our balconies with sweets,
And make our homes a blaze of light,
And tell us of the sun.

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Geraniums red as flame are there,
And golden-centred daisies white:
London makes Sussex ferns its own,
And calls on Devon for a loan;
Pink fuchsias smile in London air,
And calceolarias bright.

But one thing yet remains to do—
To look beyond our balconies.
The girl-flowers who in thousands fade
Within our city's noisome shade,
Let them be loved and cherished too,
Not cared for less than these!

Not cared for less than flowers that cry
With somewhat in their speech of scorn,
“Shame that the town that worships flowers
Should let far lovelier lives than ours
Perish! What if one rose should die?
Another rose is born.

“But if ye lose one girl-flower fair
In these dark streets by thousands trod,
That means the loss to your grim town
For ever of one lily-crown,—
That means to angel-hearts despair,
And agony to God.”

George Barlow.

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LONDON

I WANDER through each chartered street,
Near where the chartered Thames does flow,
A mark on every face I meet,
Marks of weakness, marks of love.

In every cry of every man,
In every infant's cry of fear,
In every voice, in every ban,
The mind-forged manacles I hear:

How the chimney-sweeper's cry
Every blackening church appals,
And the hapless soldier's sigh
Runs in blood down palace-walls.

But most, through midnight streets I hear
How the youthful harlot's curse
Blasts the new-born infant's tear,
And blights with plagues the marriage-hearse.

William Blake.

A FIRST IMPRESSION OF LONDON

S EVERAL hours had elapsed when awaking from a confused dream, in which Armine and all he had lately seen were blended together, he found his fellow-travellers slumbering, and the mail dashing

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along through the illuminated streets of a great city. The streets were thickly thronged. Ferdinand stared at the magnificence of the shops blazing with lights, and the multitude of men and vehicles moving in all directions. The guard sounded his bugle with treble energy, and the coach suddenly turned through an arched entrance into the court-yard of an old-fashioned inn. His fellow-passengers started, and rubbed their eyes.

"So! we have arrived, I suppose;" grumbled one of these gentlemen, taking off his night-cap.

"Yes, gentlemen, I am happy to say our journey is finished," said a more polite voice; "and a very pleasant one I have found it. Porter, have the goodness to call me a coach."

"And one for me," added the gruff voice.

"Mr. Glastonbury," whispered the awestruck Ferdinand, "is this London?"

"This is London: but we have yet two or three miles to go before we reach our quarters. I think we had better alight and look after our luggage. Gentlemen, good evening!"

It was ten o'clock. Mr. Glastonbury hailed a coach, in which, having safely deposited their portmanteaux, he and Ferdinand entered; but our young friend was so entirely overcome by his feelings and the genius of the place, that he was quite unable to make an observation. Each minute the streets seemed to grow more spacious and more brilliant, and the multitude more dense and more

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excited. Beautiful buildings, too, rose before him; palaces, and churches, and streets, and squares of imposing architecture; to his inexperienced eye and unsophisticated spirit, their route appeared a never-ending triumph. To the hackney-coachman, however, who had no imagination, and who was quite satiated with metropolitan experience, it only appeared that he had had an exceedingly good fare, and that he was jogging up from Bishopsgate Street to Charing Cross.

When Jarvis, therefore, had safely deposited his charge at Morley's Hotel, in Cockspur Street, and had extorted from them an extra shilling, in consideration of their evident rustication, he bent his course towards the Opera House, for clouds were gathering, and, with the favour of Providence, there seemed a chance about midnight of picking up some helpless beau, or desperate cabless dandy, the choicest victim in a midnight shower of these public conveyancers.

The coffee-room at Morley's was a new scene of amusement to Ferdinand, and he watched with great diversion the two evening papers portioned out among twelve eager quidnuncs, and the evident anxiety which they endured, and the nice diplomacies to which they resorted to obtain the envied journals. The entrance of our two travellers, so alarmingly increasing the demand over the supply, at first seemed to attract considerable and not very friendly notice; but when a malignant half-pay

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officer, in order to revenge himself for the restless watchfulness of his neighbour, a very political doctor of divinity, offered the journal, which he had long finished, to Glastonbury, and it was declined, the general alarm visibly diminished. Poor Mr. Glastonbury had never looked into a newspaper in his life, save the *County Chronicle*, to which he occasionally contributed a communication giving an account of the digging-up of some old coins, signed Antiquarius; or of the exhumation of some fossil remains, to which he more boldly appended his initials.

In spite of the strange clatter in the streets, Ferdinand slept well, and the next morning, after an early breakfast, himself and his fellow-traveller set out on their peregrinations. Young and sanguine, full of health and enjoyment, innocent and happy, it was with difficulty that Ferdinand could restrain his spirits, as he mingled in the bustle of the streets. It was a bright sunny morning, and, although the end of June, the town was yet quite full.

“ Is this Charing Cross, sir?—I wonder if we shall ever be able to get over.—Is this the fullest part of the town, sir?—What a fine day, sir?—How lucky we are in the weather?—We are lucky in everything! —Whose house is that?—Northumberland House! —Is it the Duke of Northumberland’s?—Does he live there?—How I should like to see it!—Is it very fine?—Who is that?—What is this?—The Admiralty; oh, let me see the Admiralty!—The Horse Guards.

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—Oh! where, where?—Let us set our watches by the Horse Guards.—Mr. Glastonbury, which is the best clock, the Horse Guards' or St. Paul's?—Is that the Treasury? Can we go in?—That is Downing Street, is it?—Is this Charing Cross still, or is it Parliament Street?—Where does Charing Cross end, and where does Parliament Street begin?—By Jove, I see Westminster Abbey!"

Benjamin Disraeli.

TWO LONDON GARDENS

THE scorn mounts fiercer in your eyes
As house on house doth press;
And now you say, "This wins the prize
For flaunting ugliness!"
Ah! I might find but what you find,
Did I not chance to know
A little garden lies behind
Where a few flowers grow.

(*Another little garden, too,
I think of—how it blooms
Sequestered from all casual view
Behind life's sordid rooms—
How men of these mean streets ring round,
Deep in their hearts, a place
Where as through rough and stony ground
Sweet flowers shoot up apace.*)

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Oh no! You miss the flower-decked plot
From where you stand! But see
That gate and side-path—can you not
Make turn the rusted key?
(*That other garden, too, is veiled,
Save as some secret door,
By skill or hap flung wide or scaled
Sets one the path before.*)

Now if you enter, do not gibe
Although the flowers appear
A scant and poorly-favoured tribe
Compared with those you rear!
(*There walks one 'mid those other flowers
Who seventy times and seven,
And more, smiles, "How much like to ours—
Like flowers we rear in heaven!"*)

Henry W. Clark.

A STREET PREACHER

“WHAT? God fight shy of the city?
It's t'other side up I guess;
If ever you want to find Him,
Whitechapel's the right address.
Alleys and slums. He knows 'em all
In the weary leagues of blackened wall;

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And all the hearts that beat therein,
And all their sorrow and want of sin—
Magdalens, thieves, and virgins white—
Lie folded safe in His arms at night.

“God won’t let go of the city;
He’s fond of the country air,
And meadows and hawthorn hedges,
But nobody wants Him there.
It’s just because the town is bad,
And its drains are foul and its lives are sad;
It’s just because of the bitter cry
That rises up to the quiet sky:
It’s just because of its sin and woe,
He sticks to it tight and He won’t let go.

“So, what though seven devils
Are worrying up and down,
Finding Hell not so home-like
As the streets of London town?—
Make no mistake! make no mistake!
They may be pushing and wide awake,
But God gets up with the wink of light,
And His shutters are hardly closed all night.
Folks may chatter, but there! you bet,
He ain’t played out in the city yet.

“Look out for God in the city!
Fog, and east wind, and damp,

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He 's trudging the crowded pavement,
Shouldered by rogue and tramp.
He couldn't look out on the sinful town,
And know its trouble and not come down!
And spite of the powers of night and Hell
Working agen him hard and well,
He 's weaving His purpose sure and fast,
And He'll gather into His Love at last."

Canon Langbridge.

XV

BALLADS AND SONGS



Ballads and Songs

THE BARREL-ORGAN

THERE'S a barrel-organ carolling across a golden street

In the City as the sun sinks low;

And the music's not immortal; but the world has made it sweet

And fulfilled it with the sunset glow;

And it pulses through the pleasures of the City and the pain

That surround the singing organ like a large eternal light;

And they've given it a glory and a part to play again In the Symphony that rules the day and night.

And now it's marching onward through the realms of old romance,

And trolling out a fond familiar tune,

And now it's roaring cannon down to fight the King of France,

And now it's Prattling softly to the moon,

And all around the organ there's a sea without a shore

Of human joys and wonders and regrets,

To remember and to recompense the music evermore

For what the cold machinery forgets. . . .

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Yes; as the music changes,
Like a prismatic glass,
It takes the light and ranges
Through all the moods that pass;
Dissects the common carnival
Of passion and regrets,
And gives the world a glimpse of all
The colours it forgets.

And there *La Traviata* sighs
Another sadder song;
And there *Il Trovatore* cries
A tale of deeper wrong;
And bolder knights to battle go
With sword and shield and lance,
Than ever here on earth below
Have whirled into—*a dance!*

Go down to Kew in lilac-time, in lilac-time, in
lilac-time;
Go down to Kew in lilac-time (it isn't far from
London!)
And you shall wander hand in hand with love in
summer's wonder-land;
Go down to Kew in lilac-time (it isn't far from
London!)

The cherry-trees are seas of bloom and soft per-
fume and sweet perfume,
The cherry-trees are seas of bloom (and oh, so
near to London!)

Ballads and Songs

And there they say, when dawn is high and all the
world's a blaze of sky

The cuckoo, though he's very shy, will sing a
song for London.

The nightingale is rather rare and yet they say
you'll hear him there

At Kew, at Kew in lilac-time (and oh, so near to
London!)

The linnet and the throstle, too, and after dark the
long halloo

And golden-eyed *tu-whit*, *tu-whoo* of owls that
ogle London.

For Noah hardly knew a bird of any kind that isn't
heard

At Kew, at Kew in lilac-time (and oh, so near
to London!)

And when the rose begins to pout and all the chest-
nut spires are out

You'll hear the rest without a doubt, all chorus-
sing for London:

Come down to Kew in lilac-time, in lilac-time, in
lilac-time;

Come down to Kew in lilac-time (it isn't far from
London!)

And you shall wander hand in hand with love in
summer's wonder-land;

Come down to Kew in lilac-time (it isn't far from
London!)

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And then the troubadour begins to thrill the golden street,
In the City as the sun sinks low;
And in all the gaudy busses there are scores of weary feet
Marking time, sweet time, with a dull mechanic beat,
And a thousand hearts are plunging to a love they'll never meet,
Through the meadows of the sunset, through the poppies and the wheat
In the land where the dead dreams go.

Verdi, Verdi, when you wrote *Il Trovatore* did you dream,
Of the City when the sun sinks low,
Of the organ and the monkey and the many-coloured stream
On the Piccadilly pavement, of the myriad eyes that seem
To be litten for a moment with a wild Italian gleam
As *A che la morte* parodies the world's eternal theme
And pulses with the sunset-glow.

There's a thief, perhaps, that listens with a face of frozen stone
In the City as the sun sinks low;

Ballads and Songs

There's a portly man of business with a balance of
his own,
There's a clerk and there's a butcher of a soft
reposeful tone,
And they're all of them returning to the heavens
they have known:
They are crammed and jammed in busses and—
they're each of them alone
In the land where the dead dreams go.

There's a very modish woman, and her smile is
very bland
In the City as the sun sinks low;
And her hansom jingles onward, but her little
jewelled hand
Is clenched a little tighter and she cannot under-
stand
What she wants or why she wanders to that un-
discovered land,
For the parties there are not at all the sort of thing
she planned,
In the land where the dead dreams go.

There's a rowing man that listens and his heart is
crying out
In the City as the sun sinks low;
For the barge, the eight, the Isis, and the coach's
whoop and shout,
For the minute-gun, the counting and the long
dishevelled rout,

London's Lure

For the howl along the tow-path and a fate that's
still in doubt,
For a roughened oar to handle and a race to think
about
In the land where the dead dreams go.

There's a labourer that listens to the voices of the
dead
In the City as the sun sinks low;
And his hand begins to tremble and his face is
rather red
As he sees a loafer watching him and—there he
turns his head
And stares into the sunset where his April love is fled,
For he hears her softly singing and his lonely soul
is led
Through the land where the dead dreams go.

There's an old and haggard demirep, it's ringing in
her ears,
In the City as the sun sinks low;
With the wild and empty sorrow of the love that
blights and sears,
Oh, and if she hurries onward, then be sure, be
sure she hears
Hears and bears the bitter burden of the unforgotten
years,
And her laugh's a little harsher and her eyes are
brimmed with tears
For the land where the dead dreams go.

Ballads and Songs

There's a barrel-organ carolling across a golden street

In the City as the sun sinks low;
Though the music's only Verdi there's a world to make it sweet

Just as yonder yellow sunset where the earth and heaven meet

Mellows all the sooty City! Hark, a hundred thousand feet

Are marching on to glory through the poppies and the wheat

In the land where the dead dreams go.

So it's Jeremiah, Jeremiah,
What have you to say
When you meet the garland girls
Tripping on their way?

All around my gala hat
I wear a wreath of roses
(A long and lonely year it is
I've waited for the May!)
If anyone should ask you,
The reason why I wear it is—
My own love, my true love is coming home to-day.

And it's buy a bunch of violets for the lady
(It's lilac-time in London, it's lilac-time in London!)

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Buy a bunch of violets for the lady;
While the sky burns blue above:
On the other side the street you'll find it shady
(It's lilac-time in London; it's lilac-time in
London!)
But buy a bunch of violets for the lady,
And tell her she's your own true love.

There's a barrel-organ carolling across a golden street
In the City as the sun sinks glittering and slow;
And the music's not immortal; but the world has made it sweet
And enriched it with the harmonies that make a song complete
In the deeper heavens of music where the night and morning meet,
As it dies into the sunset glow;
And it pulses through the pleasures of the City and the pain
That surround the singing organ like a large eternal light,
And they've given it a glory and a part to play again
In the Symphony that rules the day and night.

And there, as the music changes,
The song runs round again;
Once more it turns and ranges
Through all its joy and pain:

Ballads and Songs

Dissects the common carnival
Of passions and regrets;
And the wheeling world remembers all
The wheeling song forgets.

Once more *La Traviata* sighs
Another sadder song:
Once more *Il Trovatore* cries
A tale of deeper wrong;
Once more the Knights to battle go
With sword and shield and lance
Till once, once more, the shattered foe
Has whirled into—a dance!

*Come down to Kew in lilac-time, in lilac-time, in
lilac-time;*

*Come down to Kew in lilac-time (it isn't far from
London!)*

*And you shall wander hand in hand with love in
summer's wonder-land;*

*Come down to Kew in lilac-time (it isn't far from
London!)*

Alfred Noyes.

THE LONDON FLOWER-SELLER.

A ROSE, a rose for a penny!
And pansies twopence a bunch!—
There's the baker with loaves baked freshly,
And oh for a crust to munch!

London's Lure

All day I've sat by the station,
But nobody wants my flowers;
The wet streets steam and the sun bursts
Between the thunder-showers.

Carnations, pink and crimson,
Fresh gathered, sweet and strong!—
But over the shining pavement
The passengers hurry along.

Sweet peas!—By a cottage window
They grew; I've seen such grow,
Rosy-white, like the face of the darling
I lost in the time of snow.

My child, my sinless blossom,
My pride, though the mark of scorn!
O God! I was such a baby
Myself when the babe was born!

The mignonette's drooping sadly;
Will it sell? it is fragrant still;
Lame Milly once had some blowing
Upon her window-sill.

White jasmine! like that lady,
So dainty, and clean and sweet,
From the curls on her tranquil forehead
To the tips of her delicate feet.

Ballads and Songs

Oh to be once as she is,
With never a soil or stain!
Men bowing or speaking her gently
As she passes on to her train.

Not half so pretty as I was,
Not rich, for she walks to-day;
But out of the filth and riot,
And pure as the jasmine spray.

Did *her* father drink, I wonder?
Was *she* nursed in sins and shames?
Did they beat her, starve her, kick her,
And call her filthy names?

Sweet-williams!—Tossed me for nothing
By a lad at a fruiterer's stall;
Brown-bearded, fresh and wholesome,
Ruddy and strong and tall,

Like fresh-faced Will from the country,
Who spoke of field and plough,
And promised me marriage and left me;
Who loves him, I wonder, now?

The sky 's all black; in the distance
The angry thunder rolls;
There 's a blinding flash, with a deluge
The rain sweeps the hurrying shoals.

London's Lure

It sweeps up under my shelter,
I'm wet again to the skin,
And just one bunch of pansies
Would buy me a drop of gin.

A rose, a rose for a penny!
White lilies a penny apiece!—
The clouds from the sun are breaking,
The showers soon will cease.

A pigeon, with wings all shining,
Flits by in the sudden gold,
As if in a molten rainbow
His beautiful plumes were rolled.

Ah! my dream of the angel singing,
His eyes one flame of love,
“Though thou liest among the potsherds,
Thou shalt be as the wings of a dove.”

Roses, sweet-williams, pansies,
Jasmine and lilies fair,
Mignonette, sweet peas, carnations,
Drooping in sultry air!

Maxwell Gray.

Ballads and Songs

VAUXHALL

COME, come, I am very
Disposed to be merry—
So hey! for a wherry
I beckon and bawl!
'Tis dry, not a damp night,
And pleasure will tramp light
To music and lamp light
At shining Vauxhall!

Ay, here's the dark portal—
The check-taking mortal
I pass, and turn short all
At once on the blaze—
Names famous in story
Lit up *con amore*,
All flaming in glory,
Distracting the gaze.

Oh *my* name lies fallow—
Fame never will hallow
In red light and yellow
Poetical toil—
I've long tried to light up
My name, and take flight up;
But ink will not light up
Like cotton and oil!

London's Lure

But sad thoughts, keep under!—
The painted Rotunder
Invites me. I wonder
 Who's singing so clear?
'Tis Sinclair, high-flying,
Scotch ditties supplying;
But some hearts are sighing
 For Dignum, I fear!

How bright is the lustre,
How thick the folks muster,
And eagerly cluster,
 On bench and in box—
Whilst Povey is waking
Sweet sounds, or the taking
Kate Stephens is shaking
 Her voice and her locks!

What clapping attends her!—
The White doe befriends her—
How Braham attends her
 Away by the hand,
For love to succeed her;
The Signor doth heed her,
And sigheth to lead her
 Instead of the band!

Then out we all sally—
Time's ripe for the Ballet,
Like bees they all rally
 Before the machine —

Ballads and Songs

But I am for tracing
The bright walks and facing
The groups that are pacing
To see and be seen.

How motley they mingle—
What men might one single,
And names that would tingle
Or tickle the ear—
Fresh Chinese contrivers
Of letters—survivors
Of pawnbrokers—divers
Beau Tibbses appear!

Such little and great men,
And civic and state men—
Collectors and great men—
How pleasant to nod
To friends—to note fashions,
To make speculations
On people and passions—
To laugh at the odd!

To sup on true slices
Of ham—with fair prices
For fowl—while cool ices
And liquors abound—
To see Blackmore wander,
A small salamander,
Adown the rope yonder,
And light on the ground!

London's Lure

Oh, the fireworks are splendid;
But darkness is blended—
Bright things are soon ended,
 Fade quickly and fall!
There goes the last rocket!—
Some cash out of pocket,
By stars in the socket,
 I go from Vauxhall!

Thomas Hood.

OVER THE WATER

LOOK always on the Surrey side
For true dramatic art,
The road is long—the river wide—
But frequent buses start
From Charing Cross and Gracechurch Street,
(An inexpensive ride;)
So, if you want an evening's treat,
O seek the Surrey side.

I have been there, and still would go,
As Dr. Watts observes;
Although it's not a place, I know,
For folks with feeble nerves.
Ah me! how many roars I've had—
How many tears I've dried—
At melodramas, good and bad,
Upon the Surrey side.

Ballads and Songs

Can I forget those wicked lords,
Their voices and their calves;
The things they did upon those boards,
And never did by halves:
The peasant, brave though lowly born,
Who constantly defied
Those wicked lords with utter scorn,
Upon the Surrey side?

Can I forget those hearts of oak,
Those model British tars;
Who crack'd a skull or crack'd a joke,
Like true transpontine stars;
Who hornpip'd à la T. P. Cooke,
And sang—at least they tried—
Until the pit and gallery shook,
Upon the Surrey side?

But best of all I recollect
That maiden in distress—
So unimpeachably correct
In morals and in dress—
Who, ere the curtain fell, became
The low-born peasant's bride:
(They nearly always end the same
Upon the Surrey side.)

I gape in Covent Garden's walls,
I doze in Drury Lane;
I strive in the Lyceum stalls
To keep awake—in vain.

London's Lure

There 's nought in the dramatic way
That I can quite abide,
Except the pieces that they play
Upon the Surrey side.

Henry S. Leigh.

NEW BUILDINGS

Jam pauca aratro jugera regia

SAINT GEORGE'S FIELDS are fields no more,
The trowel supersedes the plough;
Huge inundated swamps of yore,
Are changed to civic villas now.

The builder's plank, the mason's hod,
Wide, and more wide extending still,
Usurp the violated sod,
From *Lambeth Marsh*, to *Balham Hill*.

Pert poplars, yew trees, water tubs,
No more at *Clapham* meet the eye,
But velvet lawns, Acacian shrubs,
With perfume greet the passer-by.

Thy carpets, Persia, deck our floors,
Chintz curtains shade the polish'd pane,
Verandas guard the darken'd doors,
Where dunning Phœbus knocks in vain.

Ballads and Songs

Not thus acquir'd was GRESHAM's hoard,
Who founded LONDON's mart of trade;
Not such thy life, GRIMALKIN's lord,
Who bow's recalling peal obey'd.

In *Mark* or *Mincing Lane* confin'd,
In cheerful toil they pass'd the hours;
'Twas theirs to leave their wealth behind—
To lavish, while we live, is ours.

They gave no treats to thankless kings!
Many their gains, their wants were few;
They built no house with spacious wings,
To give their riches pinions too.

Yet sometimes leaving in the lurch
Sons, to luxurious folly prone,
Their funds rebuilt the parish church—
Oh! pious waste, to us unknown.

We from our circle never roam
Nor ape our sires' eccentric sins;
Our charity begins at home,
And mostly ends where it begins.

Horace and James Smith.

London's Lure

A BALLAD

FROM Lincoln to London rode forth our young
squire,
To bring down a wife whom the swains might
admire;

But, in spite of whatever the mortal could say,
The goddess objected the length of the way.

To give up the opera, the park, and the ball
For to view the stag's horns in an old country-hall;
To have neither China nor India to see!
Nor a laceman to plague in a morning—not she!

To forsake the dear play-house, Quin, Garrick, and
Clive,

Who by dint of mere humour had kept her alive;
To forego the full box for his lonesome abode,
O heavens! she should faint, she would die on the
road;

To forego the gay fashions and gestures of France,
And leave dear Auguste in the midst of the dance,
And Harlequin too!—'twas in vain to require it;
And she wondered how folks had the face to
desire it.

She might yield to resign the sweet fingers of
Ruckholt,

Where the citizen-matron seduces her cuckold;
But Ranelagh soon would her footsteps recall,
And the music, the lamps, and the glare of Vauxhall.

Ballads and Songs

To be sure she could breathe nowhere else but in town.

Thus she talk'd like a wit, and he look'd like a clown;

But the while honest Harry despair'd to succeed,
A coach with a coronet trail'd her to Tweed.

William Shenstone.

THE LONDON LACKPENNY

TO London once my steps I bent,
Where truth in no wise should be faint;
To Westminster-ward I forthwith went,
To a man of law to make complaint,
I said, "For Mary's love, that holy saint,
Pity the poor that would proceed!"
But for lack of money, I could not speed.

And, as I thrust the press among,
By froward chance my hood was gone;
Yet for all that I stayed not long
Till to the King's Bench I was come.
Before the Judge I kneeled anon
And prayed him for God's sake take heed.
But for lack of money, I might not speed

Beneath them sat clerks a great rout,
Which fast did write by one assent;
There stood up one and cried about
"Richard, Robert, and John of Kent!"

London's Lure

I wist not well what this man meant,
He cried so thickly there indeed,
But he that lacked money might not speed.

To the Common Pleas I yode tho,¹
There sat one with a silken hood:
I 'gan him reverence for to do,
And told my case as well as I could;
How my goods were defrauded me by falsehood;
I got not a mum of his mouth for my meed,
And for lack of money I might not speed.

Unto the Rolls I gat me from thence,
Before the clerks of the Chancery;
Where many I found earning of pence;
But none at all once regarded me.
I gave them my plaint upon my knee;
They liked it well when they had it read;
But, lacking money, I could not be sped.

In Westminster Hall I found out one
Which went in a long gown of ray;²
I crouched and knelt before him; anon,
For Mary's love, for help I him pray.
"I wot not what thou mean'st," 'gan he say;
To get me thence he did me bid,
For lack of money I could not speed.

¹ Went then.

² Striped cloth.

Ballads and Songs

Within this Hall, neither rich nor yet poor
Would do for me aught although I should die;
Which seeing, I gat me out of the door;
Where Flemings began on me for to cry,—
“Master, what wilt thou copen or buy?
Fine felt hat, or spectacles to read?
Lay down your silver, and here you may speed.”

To Westminster Gate I presently went,
When the sun was at high prime;
Cooks to me they took good intent,
And proffered me bread, with ale and wine,
Ribs of beef, both fat and full fine;
A fairé cloth they 'gan for to spread,
But, wanting money, I might not then speed.

Then unto London I did me hie,
Of all the land it beareth the prize;
“Hot peascodés!” one began to cry;
“Strawberries ripe!” and “Cherries in the rise! ”
One bade me come near and buy some spice;
Pepper and saffron they 'gan me bede;²
But, for lack of money, I might not speed.

Then to the Cheap I 'gan me drawn
Where much people I saw for to stand;
One offered me velvet, silk, and lawn;
Another he taketh me by the hand,

¹ On the bough.

² Offer.

London's Lure

"Here is Paris thread, the finest in the land";
I never was used to such things indeed;
And, wanting money, I might not speed.

Then went I forth by London stone,
Throughout all the Canwick street;
Drapers much cloth me offered anon;
Then comes me one cried, "Hot sheep's feet!"
One cried "Mackerel!" "Rushes green!" another
gan greet;
One bade me buy a hood to cover my head;
But, for want of money, I might not be sped.

Then I hied me into East Cheap:
One cries "Ribs of beef and many a pie!"
Pewter pots they clattered on a heap;
There was harpé, pipe and minstrelsy;
"Yea, by cock!" "Nay, by cock!" some began cry;
Some sung of "Jenkin and Julian" for their meed;
But, for lack of money, I might not speed.

Then into Cornhill anon I yode
Where there was much stolen gear among;
I saw where hung my owné hood,
That I had lost among the throng:
To buy my own hood I thought it wrong;
I knew it as well as I knew my creed;
But, for lack of money, I could not speed.

Ballads and Songs

The Taverner took me by the sleeve;
"Sir," saith he, "will you our wine assay?"
I answered, "Thou cannot much me grieve;
A penny can do no more than it may."
I drank a pint, and for it did pay;
Yet, sore a-hungered from thence I yede;
And, wanting money, I could not speed.

Then hied I me to Billings-gate,
And one cried, "Ho! go we hence!"
I prayed a bargeman, for God's sake,
That he would sparé me my expense.
"Thou 'scap'st not here," quoth he, "under two-
pence;
I list not yet bestow any almsdeed."
Thus, lacking money, I could not speed.

Then I conveyed me into Kent;
For of the law would I meddle no more.
Because no man to me took intent,
I dight me to do as I did before.
Now Jesus that in Bethlehem was bore,
Save London and send true lawyers their meed!
For whoso wants money with them shall not speed.

John Lydgate.

London's Lure

SIR RICHARD WHITTINGTON'S ADVANCEMENT

HERE must I tell the praise
 Of worthy Whittington,
 Known to be in his days
 Thrice Mayor of London.
But of poor parentage
 Born was he, as we hear,
 And in his tender age
 Bred up in Lancashire.

Poorly to London then
 Came up this simple lad,
 Where with a merchant-man,
 Soon he a dwelling had;
And in a kitchen placed,
 A scullion for to be,
 Whereas long time he past
 In labour drudgingly.

His daily service was
 Turning spits at the fire;
 And to scour pots of brass,
 For a poor scullion's hire.
Meat and drink all his pay,
 Of coin he had no store;
 Therefore to run away,
 In secret thought he bore.

Ballads and Songs

So from this merchant-man
Whittington secretly
Towards his country ran,
To purchase liberty.
But as he went along,
In a fair summer's morn,
London bells sweetly rung,
“ Whittington, back, return ! ”

Evermore sounding so,
“ Turn again Whittington;
For thou in time shall grow
Lord Mayor of London.”
Whereupon back again
Whittington came with speed
A 'prentice to remain,
As the Lord had decreed.

“ Still blessed be the bells; ”
(This was his daily song)
“ They my good fortune tells,
Most sweetly have they rung.
If God so favour me,
I will not prove unkind:
London my love shall see,
And my great bounties find.”

But see his happy chance!
This scullion had a cat,
Which did his state advance,
And by it wealth he gat.

London's Lure

His master ventured forth,
To a land far unknown,
With merchandise of worth,
As is in stories shown.

Whittington had no more
But this poor cat as than.
Which to the ship he bore,
Like a brave merchant-man.
“Venturing the same,” quoth he,
“I may get store of gold,
And Mayor of London be,
As the bells have me told.”

Whittington's merchandise
Carried was to a land
Troubled with rats and mice,
As they did understand.
The king of that country there,
As he at dinner sat,
Daily remained in fear
Of many a mouse and rat.

Meat that on trenchers lay,
No way they could keep safe;
But by rats borne away,
Fearing no wand or staff.
Whereupon soon they brought
Whittington's nimble cat;
Which by the king was bought:
Heaps of gold given for that.

Ballads and Songs

Home again came these men
With their ships loaden so,
Whittington's wealth began
By this cat thus to grow.
Scullion's life he forsook
To be a merchant good,
And soon began to look
How well his credit stood.

After that he was chose
Sheriff of the city here,
And then full quickly rose
Higher, as did appear.
For to his cities praise
Sir Richard Whittington
Came to be in his days
Thrice Mayor of London.

More his fame to advance
Thousands he lent his king
To maintain wars in France,
Glory from thence to bring.
And after, at a feast
Which he the king did make
He burnt the bonds all in jest,
And would not money take.

Ten thousand pounds he gave
To his prince willingly,
And would not one penny have;
This in kind courtesie.

London's Lure

God did thus make him great,
So would he daily see
Poor people fed with meat
To show his charity.

Prisoners poor cherished were,
Widows sweet comfort found;
Good deeds, both far and near,
Of him do still resound.
Whittington College is
One of his charities;
Records reporteth this
To lasting memories.

Newgate he builded fair,
For prisoners to live in;
Christs-Church he did repair,
Christian love for to win.
Many more such-like deeds
Were done by Whittington;
Which joy and comfort breeds,
To such as look thereon.

Lancashire, thou hast bred
This flower of charity:
Though he be gone and dead
Yet lives he lastingly.
Those bells that call'd him so,
“ Turn again, Whittington.”
Call you back many moe
To live so in London.

Anon.

Ballads and Songs

THE CHISWICK FLOWER

FÊTE FOR 1846

H O! members take your tickets,—
Ho! maidens, choose your shawls!
The son looks out his waistcoats,
The sire selects his smalls.
To-day is Flora's triumph,
To-day great sights you view,
So, cabmen, drive your cattle,
And drive your bargains too.

Green are the squares of London,
And some few lanes are green,
And trees of city foliage
Shade walks of stone between.
And green are certain gala days,
With places known to fame—
The inner circle of the park
That bears the Regent's name.

And green are those great glasses
That hold Germania's wine,
That they tell you suit the vintage
Of the clear Moselle and Rhine:
And green are those young freshmen,
Who, to earn a gentle name,
Take credit of a tailor,
Or give it to a dame.

London's Lure

But greener far than any
Is Chiswick's shaven sward ;
And gayer than all gala-days
Are the groups that swarm abroad.
See how they muster onwards,—
The car, the cab, the team ;
My dearest friends in carriages,
My dearer self by steam.

Bright is the first fresh show of Spring,
When cucumbers are rare ;
And bright the show of hot July,
When Autumn's fruits are there :
Autumn that's forced beforehand,
As children oversage,
When all forestalls its season,
Like minds before their age.

But the brightest day among them,
The grandest show of three,
Is that which brings the roses,
And draws down you and me.
So 'mid the great Triumvirs
Did greater Caesar sway ;
So 'mid the days of Epsom
Stands out the Derby Day.

Gay are the grounds at Hackney,
And Cheam has beds in bloom ;
And Mr. Epps of Maidstone
Has flowers of faint perfume.

Ballads and Songs

And Bromley's stocks at nightfall
Breathe sweetly through the air,
And a thousand tulips ornament
Each Lea Bridge Road parterre.

And Ealing's glassy houses
Exclude each colder breeze;
And the air is full of odours
Of exotic orchides.
And there hang the strangest blossoms
From the strangest sorts of trees;
And Fahrenheit is standing at
A hundred hot degrees.

There steams the watery vapour;
There reek the fumes of peat;
There Tropic heats surround your head,
And damps strike up your feet;
There cacti stand like hedges,
A long and leafless row;
There climbers curl their tresses,
And catch the heads below.

Hot-water apparatuses,
In iron pipes, transmit
Equable sorts of atmosphere,
For plant or fruit-tree fit.
But the youth that led the maiden
Through the sweets of that parterre,
Would find her faint upon his arm,
And call, like Brougham, for air.

London's Lure

Red are the Twick'nam strawberries,
And Hampton boasts its vines;
And melons thrive in Battersea;
And Chelsea vaunts its pines.
St. George loves Sheen and Richmond
For his own immortal rose;
And Eve might envy Putney
For the apples that it grows.

But now nor Cheam nor Maidstone
Shine bright, as once they shone;
And all the stocks of Bromley,
With all their scents, are gone.
Save for its maids and moonshine
Fair Bromley has no dew,
The Lea Bridge wind wafts dust enough,
But it wafts no odours too.
Their hues, their fruits, their odours
Are all on Chiswick showered,
And Bromley, Cheam, and Maidstone
Are lank and disempowered.

Here stand the golden products
Of every sun and clime,
And seem to live, like lovers' vows,
In spite of space or time.
To bring each flower to Chiswick
Is Science sent to roam;
But the flower itself lives easy,
And makes itself at home.

Ballads and Songs

Where Suez joins the Continents,—
Where Afric joins the line,—
Where Texas joins the Union,—
And Indus joins the brine,
Come all the hues of Flora,—
The blues, the reds, the greens ;
From beyond the lines of railways
And beyond the wrists of queens.

But we only feel their odours,
And we only see their hues ;
They've esoteric meanings
That some know how to use.
And, perhaps, as Mr. Wordsworth says,
We transplant them to abuse.

Each orchis is an emblem
In its own exotic land,
And telleth tale of tenderness
That the natives understand.
Sent by mulatto Mercuries
It may augur hope or fear ;
I wish I found the lady
That could feel its meaning here.

“ *Travelling Bachelor.*”

London's Lure

MR. MOLONY'S ACCOUNT OF THE CRYSTAL PALACE

WITH ganial foire
 Thransfuse me loyre,
 Ye sacred nymphs of Pindus,
The whoile I sing
 That wondthrous thing,
The Palace made o' windows!

Say, PAXTON, truth,
 Thou wondthrous youth,
What sthroke of art celistial,
 What power was lint
 You to invint
This combineetion cristial.

O would before
 That THOMAS MOORE,
Likewise the late LORD BOYRON,
 Thim aigles strhong
 Of godlike song,
Cast oi on that cast oiron!

And saw thim walls,
 And glittering halls,
The rising slendther columns,
 Which I, poor pote,
 Could not denote,
No, not in twinty vollums.

Ballads and Songs

My Muse's words
Is like the birds
That roosts beneath the panes there;
 Her wings she spoils,
 'Gainst them bright iles,
And cracks her silly brains there.

This Palace tall,
This Cristial Hall,
Which Imperors might covet,
 Stands in High Park
 Like Noah's Ark,
A rainbow bint above it.

The towers and fanes,
In other scaynes,
The fame of this will undo,
 Saint Paul's big doom,
 Saint Payther's Room,
And Dublin's proud Rotundo.

'Tis here that roams,
As well becomes
Her dignitee and stations,
 VICTORIA Great,
 And houlds in state
The Congress of the Nations.

Her subjects pours
From distant shores,

London's Lure

Her Injians and Canajians;
And also we,
Her kingdoms three,
Attind with our allagiance.

Here comes likewise
Her bould allies,
Both Asian and European;
From East and West
They send their best
To fill her Coornucopean.

I seen (thank Grace!)
This wondthrous place
(His Noble Honour MISTHER
H. COLE it was
That gave the pass
And let me see what is there).

With conscious proide
I stood insoide
And looked the World's Great Fair in,
Until me sight
Was dazzled quite,
And couldn't see for staring.

There's holy saints
And window paints,

Ballads and Songs

By Maydiayval Pugin;
Alhamborough JONES
Did paint the tones
Of yellow and gambouge in.

There's fountains there
And crosses fair;
There's water-gods with urrns;
There's organs three
To play, d'ye see,
"God save the QUEEN," by turrns.

There's Statues bright
Of marble white,
Of silver, and of copper;
And some in zinc,
And some, I think,
That isn't over proper.

There's staym Ingynes
That stands in lines,
Enormous and amazing,
That squaal and snort
Like whales in sport
Or elephants a-grazing.

There's carts and gigs,
And pins for pigs;

London's Lure

There 's dibblers and there 's harrows,
And ploughs like toys
For little boys,
And elegant wheel-barrows.

For them genteels,
Who ride on wheels,
There 's plenty to indulge 'em;
There 's Droskys snug
From Paytersbug
And vayhcles from Bulgium.

There 's Cabs on Stands
And Shandthry-danns;
There 's Waggons from New York here;
There 's Lapland Sleighs
Have crossed the seas,
And Jaunting Cyars from Cork here.

Amazed I pass
From glass to glass
Deloigted I survey 'em ;
Fresh wondthers grows
Before me nose
In this sublime Musayum !

Look, here 's a fan
From far Japan,

Ballads and Songs

A sabre from Damasco ;
There's shawls we get
From far Thibet,
And cotton prints from Glasgow.

There's German flutes,
Marocky boots,
And Naples Macaronies ;
Bohaymia
Has sent Bohay ;
Polonia her polonies.

There's granite flints
That's quite imminse,
There's sacks of coals and fuels,
There's swords and guns,
And soap in tuns,
And Ginger-bread and Jewels.

There's taypots there,
And cannons rare ;
There's coffins filled with roses ;
There's canvass tints,
Teeth instrumints,
And shuits of clothes by MOSES.

There's lashins more
Of things in store,

London's Lure

But thim I don't remimber;
Nor could disclose
Did I compose
From May time to Novimber!

Ah, JUDY thrue!
With eyes so blue,
That you were here to view it!—
And could I screw,
But tu pound tu,
'Tis I would thrait you to it!

So let us raise
VICTORIA's praise,
And ALBERT's proud condition,
That takes his ayse
As he surveys
This Cristial Exhibition.

William Makepeace Thackeray.

THE BRIDGE OF SIGHs

"Drown'd! drown'd!"—*Hamlet*

O NE more Unfortunate,
Weary of breath,
Rashly importunate,
Gone to her death!

Ballads and Songs

Take her up tenderly,
Lift her with care;
Fashion'd so slenderly,
Young, and so fair!

Look at her garments
Clinging like cerements
Whilst the wave constantly
Drips from her clothing;
Take her up instantly,
Loving, not loathing.

Touch her not scornfully;
Think of her mournfully,
Gently and humanly;
Not of the stains of her;
All that remains of her
Now is pure womanly.

Make no deep scrutiny
Into her mutiny
Rash and undutiful;
Past all dishonour,
Death has left on her
Only the beautiful.

Still, for all slips of hers,
One of Eve's family—
Wipe those poor lips of hers,
Oozing so clammily.

London's Lure

Loop up her tresses,
Escaped from the comb,
Her fair auburn tresses:
Whilst wonderment guesses
Where was her home?

Who was her father?
Who was her mother?
Had she a sister?
Had she a brother?
Or was there a dearer one
Still, and a nearer one
Yet, than all other?

Alas! for the rarity
Of Christian charity
Under the sun!
Oh! it was pitiful!
Near a whole city full,
Home she had none!

Sisterly, brotherly,
Fatherly, motherly,
Feelings had changed;
Love, by harsh evidence,
Thrown from its eminence;
Even God's providence
Seeming estranged.

Where the lamps quiver
So far in the river,

Ballads and Songs

With many a light
From window and casement,
From garret to basement,
She stood, with amazement,
Houseless by night.

The bleak wind of March
Made her tremble and shiver;
But not the dark arch,
Or the black flowing river:
Mad from life's history,
Glad to death's mystery,
Swift to be hurl'd—
Anywhere, anywhere
Out of the world!

In she plunged boldly,
No matter how coldly
The rough river ran,—
Over the brink of it,
Picture it—think of it,
Dissolute man!
Lave in it, drink of it,
Then, if you can!

Take her up tenderly,
Lift her with care;
Fashion'd so slenderly,
Young, and so fair!

London's Lure

Ere her limbs frigidly
Stiffen too rigidly,
Decently, kindly,
Smooth, and compose them;
And her eyes, close them,
Staring so blindly!

Dreadfully staring
Through muddy impurity,
As when the daring
Last look of despairing,
Fix'd on futurity.

Perishing gloomily,
Spurr'd by contumely,
Cold inhumanity,
Burning insanity,
Into her rest.—
Cross her hands humbly,
As if praying dumbly,
Over her breast!

Owning her weakness,
Her evil behaviour,
And leaving, with meekness,
Her sins to her Saviour!

Thomas Hood.

XVI
MISCELLANEOUS



Miscellaneous

OLD LONDON

LONDON, I take thee to a Poet's heart!
For those who seek a Helicon thou art.
Let schoolboy Strephons bleat of flocks and
fields,
Each street of thine a loftier Idyl yields;
Fed by all life, and fann'd by every wind,
There burns the quenchless Poetry—*Mankind!*
Yet not for me the Olympiad of the gay,
The reeking SEASON's dusty holiday;—
Soon as its summer pomp the mead assumes,
And Flora wanders through her world of blooms,
Vain the hot field-days of the vex'd debate,
When Sirius reigns,—let Tapeworm rule the state!
Vain Devon's cards, and Lansdowne's social feast,
Wit but fatigues, and Beauty's reign hath ceased.
His mission done, the monk regains his cell;
Nor even Douro's matchless face can spell.
Far from Man's works, escaped to God's I fly,
And breathe the luxury of a smokeless sky.
Me, the still "LONDON," not the restless "TOWN"
(The light plume fluttering o'er the helmèd crown,)
Delights;—for there the grave Romance hath shed
Its hues; and air grows solemn with the Dead.
If, where the Lord of Rivers parts the throng,
And eastward glides by buried halls along,
My steps are led, I linger, and restore
To the changed wave the poet-shapes of yore;

London's Lure

See the gilt barge, and hear the fated king
Prompt the first mavis of our Minstrel spring;
Or mark, with mitred Nevile, the array
Of arms and craft alarm “the Silent way,” }
The Boar of Gloucester, hungering, scents his prey! }
Or, landward, trace where thieves their festive hall
Hold by the dens of Law, (worst thief of all!)
The antique Temple of the armèd Zeal
That wore the cross a mantle to the steel;
Time’s dreary void the kindling dream supplies,
The walls expand, the shadowy towers arise,
And forth, as when by Richard’s lion side,
For Christ and Fame, the Warrior-Phantoms ride!
Or if, less grave with thought, less rich with lore,
The later scenes, the lighter steps explore,
If through the haunts of living splendour led—
Has the quick Muse no empire but the Dead?
In each keen face, by Care or Pleasure worn,
Grief claims her sigh, or Vice invites her scorn;
And every human brow that veils a thought
Conceals the Castaly which Shakespeare sought.

Lord Lytton.

A COMPLAINT OF THE DECAY OF BEGGARS IN THE METROPOLIS

THE Mendicants of this great city were so many of her rights, her lions. I can no more spare them than I could the Cries of London. No corner of a street is complete without them.

Miscellaneous

They are as indispensable as the Ballad Singer; and in their picturesque attire as ornamental as the signs of old London. They were the standing morals, emblems, mementos, dial-mottos, the spital sermons, the books for children, the salutary checks and pauses to the high and rushing tide of greasy citizenry;

“Look
Upon that poor and broken bankrupt there.”

Above all, those old blind Tobits that used to line the walls of Lincoln's Inn Garden, before modern fastidiousness had expelled them, casting up their ruined orbs to catch a ray of pity, and (if possible) of light, with their faithful Dog Guide at their feet—whither are they fled? or into what corners, blind as themselves, have they been driven, out of the wholesome air and sun-warmth? Immured between four walls, in what withering poor-house do they endure the penalty of double darkness, where the chink of the dropt halfpenny no more consoles their forlorn bereavement, far from the sound of the cheerful and hope-stirring tread of the passenger? Where hang their useless staves? and who will farm their dogs? Have the overseers of St. L—— caused them to be shot? or were they tied up in sacks, and dropt into the Thames, at the suggestion of B——, the mild rector of ——?

Charles Lamb.

London's Lure

LIEN CHI ALTANGI AT VAUXHALL

THE people of London are as fond of walking as our friends at Pekin of riding: one of the principal entertainments of the citizens here in summer is to repair about nightfall to a garden not far from town, where they walk about, show their best clothes and best faces, and listen to a concert provided for the occasion. . . . The illuminations began before we arrived, and I must confess, that upon entering the Gardens, I found every sense overpaid with more than expected pleasure; the lights everywhere glimmering through the scarcely moving trees, the full-bodied concert bursting on the stillness of the night, the natural concert of the birds in the more retired part of the grove, vying with that which was formed by art; the company gaily dressed, looking satisfaction, and the tables spread with various delicacies, all conspired to fill my imagination with the visionary happiness of the Arabian lawgiver, and lifted me into an ecstasy of admiration. "Head of Confucius," cried I to my friend, "this is fine! this unites rural beauty with courtly magnificence! if we except the virgins of immortality that hang on every tree, and may be plucked at every desire, I do not see this falls short of Mahomet's paradise!" "As for virgins," cries my friend, "it is true they are a fruit that do not much abound in our Gardens here; but if ladies, as plenty as apples in

Miscellaneous

autumn, and as complying as any hour of them all, can content you, I fancy we have no need to go to heaven for paradise."

Oliver Goldsmith.

HAMPSTEAD HEATH

THIS is the Heath of Hampstead,
There is the dome of St. Paul's;
Beneath, on the serried house-tops,
A chequered lustre falls:
And the mighty city of London,
Under the clouds and the light,
Seems a low, wet beach, half shingle,
With a few sharp rocks upright.

James Thomson.

LONDON, MDCCCII

FRIEND! I know not which way I must look
For comfort, being, as I am, opprest
To think that now our life is only drest
For show; mean handiwork of craftsman, cook,
Or groom!—We must run glittering like a brook
In the open sunshine, or we are unblest;
The wealthiest man among us is the best:
No grandeur now in nature or in book

London's Lure

Delights us. Rapine, avarice, expense,
This is idolatry; and these we adore:
Plain living and high thinking are no more:
The homely beauty of the good old cause
Is gone; our peace, our fearful innocence,
And pure religion breathing household laws.

William Wordsworth.

A LONDON PLANE-TREE

GREEN is the plane-tree in the square,
The other trees are brown;
They droop and pine for country air;
The plane-tree loves the town.

Here, from my garret-pane, I mark
The plane-tree bud and blow,
Shed her recuperative bark,
And spread her shade below.

Among her branches, in and out,
The city breezes play;
The dun fog wraps her round about;
Above, the smoke curls grey.

Others the country take for choice,
And hold the town in scorn;
But she has listened to the voice
Of city breezes borne.

Amy Levy.

Miscellaneous

THE COURTESY OF COCKAYNE

ON arriving at Brighton (in the full season) a lad offered to conduct us to an inn. "Did he think there was room?" He was sure of it. "Did he belong to the inn?" "No, he was from London." In fact he was a young gentleman from town, who had been stopping some time at the White-Horse Hotel, and who wished to employ his spare time (when he was not riding out on a blood horse) in serving the house, and relieving the perplexities of his fellow-travellers. No one but a Londoner would volunteer his assistance in this way. Amiable land of *Cockayne*, happy in itself, and in making others happy! Blest exuberance of self-satisfaction, that overflows upon others! Delightful impertinence, that is forward to oblige them!

William Hazlitt.

DON JUAN APPROACHES LONDON

THROUGH Groves, so call'd as being void of trees,
(Like *lucus* from *no* light); through prospects named

Mount Pleasant, as containing nought to please
Nor much to climb; through little boxes framed
Of bricks, to let the dust in at your ease,
With "To be let" upon their doors proclaimed;

London's Lure

Through " Rows " most modestly called Paradise,"
Which Eve might quit without much sacrifice;—

Through coaches, drays, choked turnpikes, and a
whirl

Of wheels, and roar of voices, and confusion;
Here taverns wooing to a pint of " purl,"

There mails fast flying off like a delusion;
There barbers' blocks with periwigs in curl

In windows; here the lamplighter's infusion
Slowly distill'd into the glimmering glass
For in those days we had not got to gas);—

Through this, and much, and more, is the approach
Of travellers to mighty Babylon:

Whether they come by horse, or chaise, or coach,
With slight exceptions, all the ways seem one.

I could say more, but do not choose to encroach

Upon the Guide-book's privilege. The sun
Had set some time, and night was on the ridge
Of twilight, as the party cross'd the bridge.

That's rather fine, the gentle sound of Thamis—

Who vindicates a moment, too, his stream—
Though hardly heard through multifarious " damme's."

The lamps of Westminster's more regular gleam,
The breadth of pavement, and yon shrine where
fame is

A special resident—whose pallid beam
In shape of moonshine hovers o'er the pile—
Make this a sacred part of Albion's isle.

Miscellaneous

The Druids' groves are gone—so much the better:
Stonehenge is not—but what the devil is it?—
But Bedlam still exists with its sage fetter,
That madmen may not bite you on a visit;
The Bench too seats or suits full many a debtor;
The Mansion House, too, (though some people
quiz it,) To me appears a stiff yet grand erection:
But then the Abbey's worth the whole collection.

The line of lights, too, up to Charing Cross,
Pall Mall, and so forth, have a coruscation
Like gold as in comparison to dross,
Matched with the Continent's illumination,
Whose cities Night by no means deigns to gloss.

The French were not yet a lamp-lighting nation,
And when they grew so—on their new-found lantern,
Instead of wicks, they made a wicked man turn.

A row of gentlemen along the streets
Suspended may illuminate mankind,
As also bonfires made of country-seats;
But the old way is best for the purblind:
The other looks like phosphorus on sheets,
A sort of ignis fatuus to the mind,
Which, though 'tis certain to perplex and frighten,
Must burn more mildly ere it can enlighten.

But London's so well lit, that if Diogenes
Could recommence to hunt his *honest man*,
And found him not amidst the various progenies

London's Lure

Of this enormous city's spreading spawn.
'Twere not for want of lamps to aid his dodging his
Yet undiscover'd treasure. What *I* can,
I've done to find the same throughout life's journey,
But see the world is only one attorney.

Lord Byron.

WANDERINGS IN LONDON

PRODIGIOUS was the amount of life I lived that morning. Finding myself before St. Paul's, I went in; I mounted to the dome: I saw thence London, with its river, and its bridges, and its churches: I saw antique Westminster, and the green Temple Gardens, with sun upon them, and a glad, blue sky, of early spring above; and, between them and it, not too dense a cloud of haze.

Descending, I went wandering whither chance might lead, in a still ecstasy of freedom and enjoyment; and I got—I know not how—I got into the heart of city life. I saw and felt London at last: I got into the Strand; I went up Cornhill; I mixed with the life passing along; I dared the perils of crossings. To do this, and to do it utterly alone, gave me, perhaps an irrational, but a real pleasure. Since those days I have seen the West End, the parks, the fine squares, but I love the city far better. The city seems so much more in earnest: its business, its rush, its roar, are such serious things,

Miscellaneous

sights and sounds. The city is getting its living—the West End but enjoying its pleasure. At the West End you may be amused, but in the city you are deeply excited.

Charlotte Brontë.

LONDON MARKETS

SHALL the large mutton smoak upon your boards?
Such, *Newgate's* copious market best affords.
Would'st thou with mighty beef augment thy meal?
Seek *Leaden hall*; St. *James's* sends thee veal;
Thames-street gives cheeses; *Covent-garden* fruits;
Moor-fields old books; and *Monmouth-street* old suits.
Hence may'st thou well supply the wants of life,
Support thy family and cloath thy wife.

John Gay.

REMINISCENCES OF LONDON

SOME day I will go to London, and spend a day or two amid the dear old horrors. Some of the places, I know, have disappeared. I see the winding way by which I went from Oxford Street, at the foot of Tottenham Court Road, to Leicester Square, and, somewhere in the labyrinth (I think of it as always foggy and gas-lit) was a shop which had pies and puddings in the window, puddings and pies kept hot by steam rising through perforated metal. How many a time have I stood

London's Lure

there, raging with hunger, unable to purchase even one pennyworth of food! The shop and the street have long since vanished; does any man remember them so feelingly as I? But I think most of my haunts are still in existence: to tread again those pavements, to look at those grimy doorways and purblind windows, would affect me strangely.

I see that alley hidden on the west side of Tottenham Court Road, where, after living in a back bedroom on the top floor, I had to exchange for the front cellar; there was a difference, if I remember rightly, of sixpence a week, and sixpence in those days, was a very great consideration—why, it meant a couple of meals. (I once *found* sixpence in the street, and had an exultation which is vivid in me at this moment.) The front cellar was stone-floored; its furniture was a table, a chair, a wash-stand, and a bed; the window, which of course had never been cleaned since it was put in, received light through a flat grating in the alley above. Here I lived; here *I wrote*. Yes, “literary work” was done at that filthy deal table, on which, by the bye, lay my Homer, my Shakespeare, and the few other books I then possessed. At night, as I lay in bed, I used to hear the tramp, tramp of a *posse* of policemen who passed along the alley on their way to relieve guard; their heavy feet sometimes sounded on the grating above my window.

George Gissing.

Miscellaneous

MARTIAL IN LONDON

EXQUISITE wines and comestibles,
From Slater, and Fortnum and Mason;
Billiards, *écarté*, and chess-tables;
Water in vast marble basin;
Luminous books (not voluminous)
To read under beech-trees cacuminous;
One friend who is fond of a distich,
And doesn't get too syllogistic;
A valet, who knows the complete art
Of service;—a maiden, his sweetheart;
Give me these, in some rural pavilion,
And I'll envy no Rothschild his million.

Mortimer Collins.

THE MONSTER LONDON LAUGHS AT ME

WHILE this hard truth I teach, methinks, I see
The monster London laugh at me;
I should at thee too, foolish city!
If it were fit to laugh at misery;
But thy estate I pity.

Let but thy wicked men from out thee go,
And all the fools that crowd thee so,
Even thou, who dost thy millions boast,
A village less than Islington will grow,
A solitude almost.

Abraham Cowley.

London's Lure

A DAY IN LONDON

London is a giant,—strangers can only reach his feet. Shut up in our apartments, well warmed and well lighted, and where we seem to want nothing but a little of that immense society in the midst of which we are suspended, but not mixed, we have full leisure to observe its outward aspect and general movements, and listen to the roar of its waves, breaking around us in measured time, like the tides of the ocean.

“ ‘Tis pleasant through the loop-holes of retreat
To peep at such a world—to see the stir
Of the great Babel, and not feel the crowd;
To hear the roar she sends through all her gates,
At a safe distance.”

In the morning all is calm,—not a mouse stirring before ten o'clock; the shops then begin to open. Milk-women, with their pails perfectly neat, suspended at the two extremities of a yoke, carefully shaped to fit the shoulders, and surrounded with small tin measures of cream, ring at every door, with reiterated pulls, to hasten the maid-servants, who come half-asleep to receive a measure as big as an egg, being the allowance of a family; for it is necessary to explain, that milk is not here either food or drink, but a tincture,—an elixir exhibited in drops, five or six at most, in a cup of tea, morning and evening. It would be difficult to say what

Miscellaneous

taste or what quality these drops may impart; but so it is; and nobody thinks of questioning the propriety of the custom. Not a single carriage,—not a cart are seen passing. The first considerable stir is the drum and military music of the Guards, marching from their barracks to Hyde Park, having at their head three or four negro giants, striking high, gracefully, and strong, the resounding cymbal. About three or four o'clock the fashionable world gives some signs of life; issuing forth to pay visits, or rather leave cards at the doors of friends, never seen but in the crowd of assemblies; to go to shops, see sights, or lounge in Bond Street,—an ugly inconvenient street, the attractions of which it is difficult to understand. At five or six they return home to dress for dinner. The streets are then lighted from one end to the other, or rather edged on either side with two long lines of little brightish dots, indicative of light, but yielding in fact very little;—these are the lamps. They are not suspended in the middle of the streets as at Paris, but fixed on irons eight or nine feet high, ranged along the houses. The want of reflector is probably the cause of their giving so little light. From six to eight, the *noise* of wheels increases; it is the dinner hour. A multitude of carriages, with two eyes of flame staring in the dark before each of them, shake the pavement and the very houses, following and crossing each other at full speed. Stopping suddenly, a footman jumps down, runs to the door, and lifts

London's Lure

the heavy knocker—gives a great knock—then several smaller ones in quick succession—then with all his might—flourishing as on a drum, with an art, and an air, and a delicacy of touch, which denote the quality, the rank, and the fortune of his master.

For two hours, or nearly, there is a pause; at ten a *rédoulement* comes on. This is the great crisis of dress, of noise, and of rapidity—a universal hubbub; a sort of uniform grinding and shaking, like that experienced in a great mill with fifty pair of stones; and, if I was not afraid of appearing to exaggerate, I should say that it came upon the ear like the fall of Niagara, heard at two miles distance! This crisis continues undiminished till twelve or one o'clock; then less and less during the rest of the night,—till, at the approach of day, a single carriage is heard now and then at a great distance.

Louis Simond.

ON THE TOWN'S HONEST MAN

YOU wonder who this is, and why I name
Him not aloud, that boasts so good a fame:
Naming so many too! But this is one
Suffers no name, but a description;
Being no vicious person, but the Vice
About the town; and known, too, at that price,

Miscellaneous

A subtle thing that doth affections win
By speaking well o' the company it's in,
Talks loud and bawdy, has a gathered deal
Of news and noise, to sow out a long meal.
Can come from Tripoli, leap stools and wink
Do all that longs to the anarchy of drink,
Except the duel: can sing songs and catches,
Give every one his dose of mirth; and watches
Whose name's unwelcome to the present ear,
And him it lays on—if he be not there,
Tells of him all the tales itself then makes;
But if it shall be questioned, undertakes
It will deny all, and forswear it too;
Not that it fears, but will not have to do
With such a one, and therein keeps its word.
'Twill see its sister naked, ere a sword.
At every meal, where it doth dine or sup
The cloth's no sooner gone, but it gets up
And, shifting of its faces, doth play more
Parts than one Italian could do with his door;
Acts old Iniquity; and, in the fit
Of miming, gets th' opinion of a wit;
Executes men in picture; by defect,
From friendship, is its own fame's architect:
An engineer in slanders of all fashions,
That, seeming praises, are yet accusations.
Described, it's thus: defined would you it have?
Then, the town's honest man's her arrant'st knave.

Ben Jonson.

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XVII
L'ENVOI



L'Envoi

A T last, some curious traveller from Lima will visit England and give a description of the ruins of St. Paul's, like the editions of Balbec and Palmyra.

Horace Walpole: Letter to Horace Mann, November 24, 1774.

I APPROVE your printing in manuscript, that is, not for the public, for who knows how long the public will be able, or be permitted to read? Bury a few copies against this Island is rediscovered. Some American versed in the old English language will translate it, and revise the true taste in gardening, though he will smile at the diminutive scenes on the little Thames when he is planting a forest on the banks of the Oronoko. I love to skip into futurity and imagine what will be done on the giant scale of a new hemisphere; but I am in little London, and must go and dress for dinner with some of the inhabitants of that ancient metropolis, now in ruins which was really for a moment the capital of a large

London's Lure

empire, but the poor man who made it so, outlived himself and the duration of the empire.

Horace Walpole: Letter to the Rev. William Mason, November 27, 1775.

W HERE now is Britain? . . .

* * * *

Even as the savage sits upon the stone
That marks her capitols, and hears
The bittern booming in the wilds, he shrinks
From the dismaying solitude.

Henry Kirke White: Time
(written about 1804).

HOPING that the immortality which you have given to the Fudges, you will receive from them; and in the firm expectation, that when London shall be an habitation of bitterns, when St. Paul's and Westminster Abbey shall stand, shapeless and nameless ruins in the midst of an unpeopled marsh; when the piers of Waterloo Bridge shall become the nuclei of islets of reeds and osiers, and cast the jagged shadows of their broken arches on

L'Envoi

the solitary stream, some transatlantic Commentator will be weighing in the scales of some new and now unimagined system of criticism, the respective merits of the Bells and the Fudges, and their historians.

I remain, dear Tom,
Yours sincerely

MICHING MALLECHO.

P. B. Shelley: "Peter Bell the Third"
— *Dedication to Thomas Moore,*
December 1, 1819.

SOME traveller from New Zealand shall, in the midst of a vast solitude, take his stand on a broken arch of London Bridge to sketch the ruins of St. Paul's.

*Lord Macaulay: Essay on Ranke's
"History of the Popes" (1840).*

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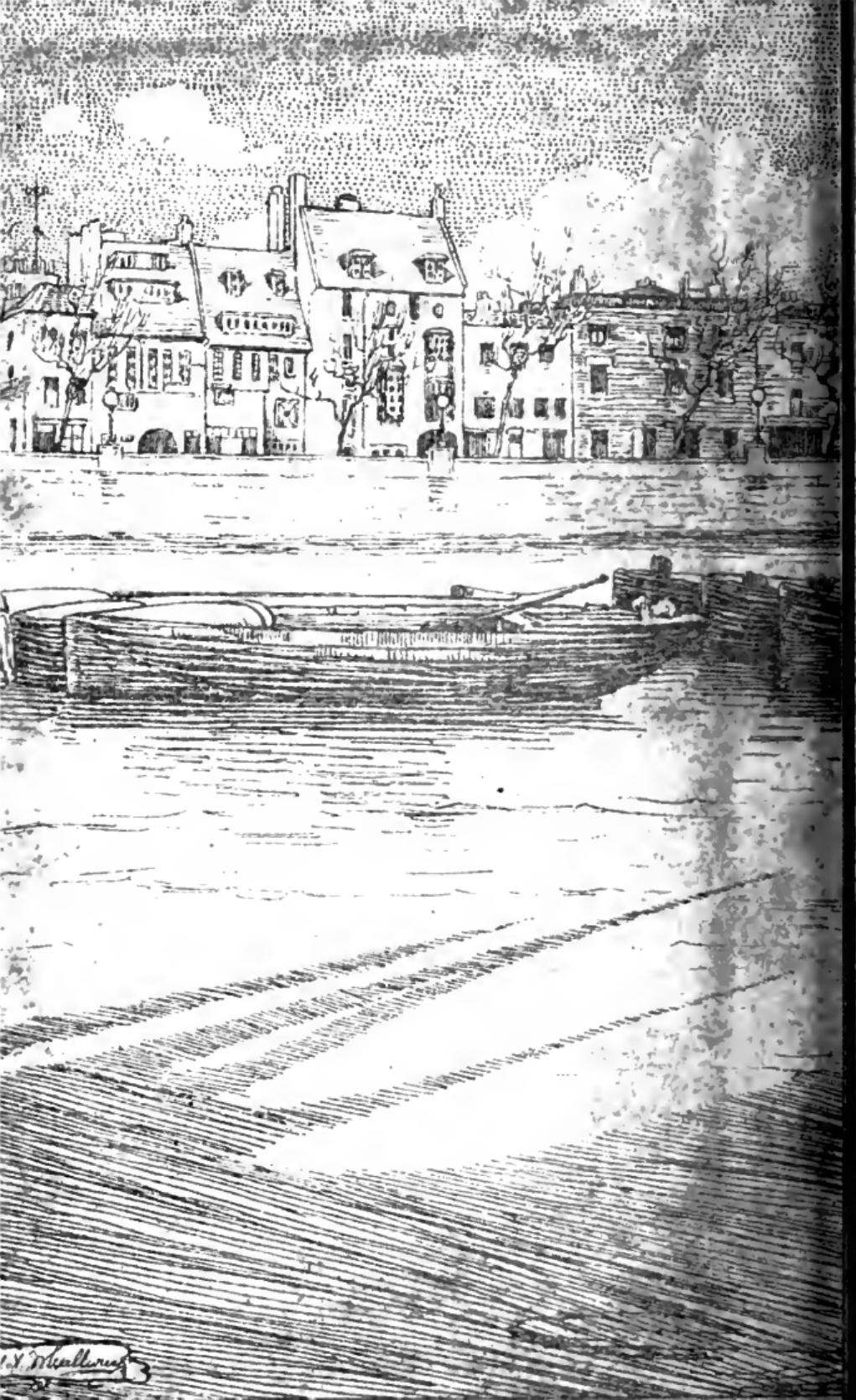
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